

A commentary on the Catholic Epistles /

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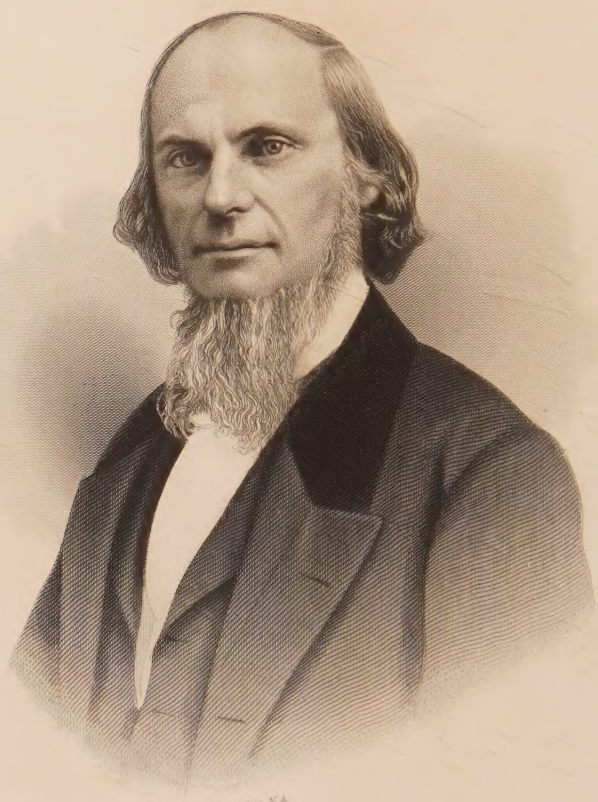
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John T. Demarest.

A
COMMENTARY
ON
THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

BY
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INTRODUCTION.

I. *The Catholic Epistles*.—In the fourth century, and sometimes before, ecclesiastical writers were wont to call the epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude *catholic*, i. e., universal or general. Why did they thus describe them?

Most critics suppose they were so named because not addressed, like Paul's epistles, to Christians living in particular cities or provinces, but to believers in various countries. Thus understood, the expression applies to most of these letters, not to the second and third epistles of John.

Others think they were so called in order to distinguish them from Paul's epistles, and to describe them as epistles composed by the other apostles, or apostolical men (N. T. prophets or evangelists), who were authors.

Others suppose the title originated from their contents; but this is not at all likely, since most of the letters relate not to the common topics of theology, but are especially intended to refute every kind of Antinomian licentiousness.

Finally, others conjecture that they were called catholic because of their universal or general reception by the Church as inspired compositions. In this sense catholic would be equivalent to canonical, as they were afterwards called.

We retain the title because of its long use by Church writers, and its convenience in distinguishing the seven epistles from the Pauline.

Their Genuineness.—(A work is genuine when ascribed to the right author.) This was acknowledged by Christians generally in the latter part of the fourth century; and with

respect to 1 Pet. and 1 Jno., was never controverted in the ancient Church. But at the beginning of the third and fourth centuries, some critics entertained doubts concerning the genuineness of Jas., 2 Pet., 2 and 3 Jno., and Jude. But when Eusebius wrote his Ecclesiastical History, about A.D. 312, they were well known to and approved by most ecclesiastical writers as genuine. (E. H. 3, 25.)

The doubts of these critics arose from various sources; sometimes from the difficulty of ascertaining the author: whether, for instance, the epistle of James was written by the apostle James the son of Alphaeus, or by James the Lord's brother. And so with regard to 2 and 3 Jno., and the epistle of Jude. At other times their doubts originated from preconceived opinions, or dogmatic prejudice. We know that Luther called the inspired and eloquent epistle of James "an epistle of straw." Now what occurred through doctrinal prejudice in the sixteenth century can be no marvel in the third and fourth. (Other sources of doubt are indicated in our introductions to 2 Pet. and Jude.)

These doubts prove that Christians did not blindly receive any and every work claiming to be written by inspired men, but subjected them to a thorough examination. And hence the subsequent general reception of these epistles shows that the doubts of some concerning them rested on no solid foundation.

The internal evidence is decidedly in their favor; there being nothing in any of them unworthy of a legate of Christ.

II. *The Epistle of James: Its Genuineness.*—Matters of fact, such as the authorship of a work, must be settled, not by our philosophy or divinity, but chiefly by external or historical evidence. And that this epistle was written by "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," can be proved by such evidence.

1. In the fourth century it was generally received by Christians as genuine.

2. In the third century it is thus cited by Origen: "But

though it be called faith, yet if it be without works, such a faith is dead, as we read in the epistle ascribed to James." (Lardner, vol. 2, p. 507.)

But before Origen, *Clement of Alexandria*, according to the testimonies of Eusebius and Photius, wrote brief notes on all the catholic epistles; thus proving their existence and circulation in the Christian Church at the close of the second and beginning of the third century. The testimonies follow: "In his Hypotyposes Clement gives short explications of the whole New Testament Scripture, not omitting the controverted, I mean *the epistle of Jude and the rest of the catholic epistles*." (Eus. E. H. 6: 14. Burton's ed. p. 190.) Photius thus: "The whole scope [of Clement's Hypotyposes] seems to be an interpretation of Genesis, Exodus, the Psalms, Paul's epistles, *the catholic epistles*, and Ecclesiasticus." (Lardner, vol. 2, p. 235.) Now, it is unquestionable that when Eusebius and Photius speak of "the catholic epistles," they mean the seven epistles—one of James, two by Peter, three of John, and one by Jude.

Hippolytus also cites Jas. 2: 13, thus: "For judgment is without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy." (De Consummatione, § 47. The Greek is the same as that of James: Fabricius, p. 28, and Ante-Nicene Library, Hipp. vol. 2, p. 129. There is no good reason to doubt of the genuineness of this homily, since in its leading thoughts it agrees well with the "Treatise concerning Christ and Antichrist," which all receive as a genuine work of Hippolytus.)

3. In the second century, *Irenæus* of Lyons alludes to expressions that are peculiar to James: "We, . . . having been formed after His likeness, and made *the first fruits of creation*:" initium facturæ, 5, 1, 1. Compare James 1: 18.

Again, 5, 10, 1, "Those persons who are not bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, . . . if they use diligence and *receive the word of God as a graft*, arrive at the pristine nature of man—that which was created after the image and likeness of God." Jas. 1: 21. "Wherefore putting off all

filthiness and overflowing of malice, in meekness *receive the ingrafted word*, which is able to save your souls."

Once more, 4, 16, 2, "And that man was not justified by these things, this fact shows, that *Abraham* himself *believed God*, and it was imputed to him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God." But these citations from the Old Testament occur in this order only in Jas. 2 : 23.

Hermas, Com. 9, enforcing unshaken faith in all our prayers, says: "They who doubt as to God are like *the double-minded*, and obtain none of their requests. But they who are perfect in faith ask everything, trusting in God; and they receive, because they ask without doubting. For every *double-minded man*, even if he repent, will with difficulty be saved." Here the word *dipsuchos*, found only in Jas. 1 : 8 and 4 : 8, is used, and it is certain that *Hermas* alludes to Jas. 1 : 3-8. (Hefele. Pat. Apost. Opera. ed. 3, pp. 367, 368.)

Barnabas also uses the cognate verb *dipsuceo*, § 19: "Thou shalt not be double-minded, whether it will be or not": referring, perhaps, to the fulfilment of God's promise; so that hesitation or perplexing doubt in that matter is meant. And *Clement* of Rome, towards the conclusion of the first century, also has the rare word *dipsuchos*, § 11 and § 23: "Miserable are the double-minded, the doubtful in soul." Also, in the second epistle or homily, § 11.

4. The epistle of James was received as genuine by the Syrian churches; which is evident from the fact that it was contained in the Peshito, or old Syriac version of the New Testament, made at the close of the first century, or the commencement of the second. And thus this epistle is by historical evidence traced from the fourth century up to the age of the apostles.

III. *Was the writer of this epistle an apostle?*—In the catalogues of the apostles we read of James the son of Zebedee, and James the son of Alphaeus, Mat. 10, Mark 3, Luke 6, Acts 1, and of James the Lord's brother, in Mat. 13 : 55, Gal. 1 : 19, and elsewhere.

Some hold that James the son of Alphaeus and James the Lord's brother are different names of one and the same person. But this cannot be ; for none of the brothers of our Lord were apostles. Not before his resurrection ; for then they did not believe in Him, Jno. 7 : 5. Not after His resurrection ; for then they are distinguished from the apostles, first as believers, Acts 1 : 14, and next as evangelists, 1 Cor. 9 : 5.

The author of this epistle describes himself as " a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." Now, the word servant may designate an apostle, since John calls himself a servant of God, Rev. 1 : 1 ; and it may not, for in Phil. 1 : 1, the phrase, " servants of Jesus Christ," is applied to Paul as an apostle and to Timothy as an evangelist : 2 Tim. 4 : 5.

We incline to the opinion that it was written by James the Lord's brother ; and if he were the same as James the Just spoken of by the ancients, then he resided at Jerusalem and presided over the church there, while some of his brothers were evangelists, or preachers of the Gospel under apostolical direction : 1 Cor. 9 : 5, with 1 Tim. 1 : 3, 6 : 20, 21. Prophets and evangelists ranked next to apostles in the primitive Church, 1 Cor. 12 : 28, 29 ; Eph. 4 : 11. And some evangelists are called prophets, or inspired men, Acts 15 : 32. If then this epistle was written by James the Lord's brother, he was a prophet in the apostolic Church, and his epistle is inspired ; like the gospels of Mark and Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, received by the Church universal as canonical, although written by prophets or evangelists. And the same must be held concerning the epistle of Jude the brother of James.

Gal. 1 : 19, when rightly understood, is no valid objection to this opinion ; for the expression there rendered " save" is sometimes an adversative particle equivalent to *but*, and in order to attain in such cases the exact meaning of the words that follow it, the verb from the preceding clause must be supplied ; as in the following passages : Luke 4 : 26, 27, " And to none of them was Elijah sent ; but to

Sarepta of Sidon, to a widow woman" was he sent. "And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them were cleansed ; but Naaman the Syrian" was cleansed. Jno. 17 : 12, "And none of them is lost ; but the son of perdition" is lost. (See also Rev. 9 : 4, 21 : 27.) In the same manner we should translate Gal. 1 : 19—"And another of the apostles I saw not ; but" I saw "James the Lord's brother ;" otherwise, as aforesaid, it would contradict Acts 1 : 14, and 1 Cor. 9 : 5. (Cf. our Introduction to the Epistle of Jude.)

IV. *Persons Addressed.*—James writes "to the twelve tribes that are in the dispersion," *i.e.*, to all Israelites dispersed among the Gentiles, whether professors of Christianity or adherents of Judaism. The Israelites in Palestine were at home, or in their own land ; out of Palestine, they were in the dispersion, or scattered abroad among other nations. Compare Jno. 7 : 35, 1 Pet. 1 : 1., Gr., and Sept. Deut. 30 : 4, Isa. 49 : 6.

Paul, as well as James, takes it for granted that the twelve tribes were then living, Acts 26 : 7. And in Acts ii. their wide dispersion is incidentally noticed. A fact so well known and undisputed needs no confirmation, but we may refer to the testimony of Philo (*Contra Flac.* § 57), to that of Strabo in *Jos. Ant.* 14, 7 : 2, and to the testimony of Josephus himself, *Ant.* 10, 5 : 2.

That James had a special reference to converts from Judaism to Christianity, is evident from the general tenor of his epistle. That he intended and desired those who were still clinging to Judaism to be profited by his letter, is manifest from 4 : 1 to 5 : 6. And that he supposed some professors of Christianity were in an unconverted state, is certain from the whole of the second chapter.

V. *Date.*—Some suppose the epistle was composed before or about the time of the council at Jerusalem, A.D. 50. Others, about A.D. 60 or 61. We agree with those who think that the time cannot be accurately settled ; no unequivocal hints being given in the letter, unless the allusion

to the name Christian be an exception, 2 : 7 (Acts II : 26). Cf. 4 : 1, 2.

VI. *Style*.—This is exceedingly earnest, impassioned, nobly bold, truly eloquent, and in general perspicuous. Beautiful figures and apt illustrations of his main positions frequently appear, and all in order more strikingly to show the absolute necessity of holiness.

VII. *General Characteristics*.—In this homiletical epistle the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, though always assumed, are not the principal topics. The epistle is ethical, not didactic ; the main design being to reach and pierce the conscience, and so to urge to neglected duties, or warn against prevailing sins. In this respect it is like the book of Proverbs, and our Lord's sermon on the mount, to which James once and again tacitly alludes.

Hence we find it filled with precepts of the clearest and holiest character, and enforced by motives that stir the soul to its very depths ; by promises which ever ring in the ear of hope, and, like the bow in the cloud, assure us that the storm of sorrow is passing away and will soon be gone for ever, and that even now the darkest clouds of affliction may and should be illuminated all over with the sunshine of joy.

This epistle is also admirably adapted to cheer the pious poor ; to alarm the impious rich ; to awaken the self-deceived ; and to warn the formalist of the sin and danger of a mere lip-service, a mere ear-worship, a mere intellectual assent to revealed truth, while the heart is far from God and righteousness. In these and like particulars, James is surpassed by none of the apostles.

VIII. *Analysis of Contents*.—Interpreters differ much as to the scope or main design of the sacred author. But in our judgment it is as follows : *The manifestations, effects, or characteristics, of true and false religion* ; this thought underlying all his admonitions, and sometimes explicitly asserted, as in 3 : 13-18, with 1 : 26, 27, 2 : 1, 14.

A. Exhortations addressed to professed believers.

1. Temptations, external and internal, and how they should be and are regarded by the pious, 1 : 2-17.
2. True religion begins with regeneration, 18.
3. Duties of those who profess to be regenerated, 19-27.
4. True religion is ever united with faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One, but this faith is incompatible with respect of persons, 2 : 1-13.
5. Faith in Christ cannot exist without its characteristic and appropriate works, 14-26.
6. True and false religion as shown by the right use and abuse of the tongue, 3 : 1-12.
7. True and false religion as manifested, the former in benevolence, the latter in malignity, 13-18.

B. Exhortations addressed to those still clinging to Judaism, and wholly under the sway of their own evil passions.

1. True religion inconsistent with a seditious, fanatically zealous, and murderous spirit, and with supreme love to the world, 4 : 1-6.
2. A persuasive exhortation to conversion, 7-10.
3. Detraction of every kind inconsistent with regard for the moral law and its great author, 11-12.
4. An admonition to those who are determined to become rich, 13-17.
5. Judgments denounced against various classes of the ungodly rich, 5 : 1-6.

C. Concluding exhortations addressed to professed believers.

1. Wait patiently until the coming of Christ, and establish your hearts as to that coming, 5 : 7-8.
2. Groan not against your brethren, 9.
3. Imitate the prophets in patient waiting, while suffering evil from the hands of men, 10-11.
4. Abstain from all irreverence toward God, 12.
5. Adapt your devotions to your circumstances ; and forget not the efficacy of earnest prayer, 13-18.
6. Strive to bring back the wanderer, 19-20.

IX. *Commentaries Freely Used.*—*Poli Synopsis*, London, 1669–1676. In consequence of the kindness of Rev. Marshall B. Smith, of the Reformed Episcopal Church, we have a beautiful and complete copy of this well-known work.

Calvin: *Commentarii in Epistolas Cath.* Amst. ed. of his works. *Dickson*, *Exp. Anal. Apost. Epist.* Glasuæ, 1645. *Bengel*, *Gnomon N. T.* Tübingen, 1835 and 1836. *Whitby*, *Scott*, *Doddridge* and *Burkitt*, *Jamieson*, *Fausset*, and *Brown*, Hartford, 1871.

On the catholic epistles: special commentaries. *Benson*, *Barnes*, and the *Com. in the Lange series by Mombert*, the authors of which are mentioned below.

On James: *Manton*, *Lange*, and *Oosterzee*.

On the Epistles of Peter: *Lillie's Lectures*, and *Fronmüller*.

On 1 Peter: *Leighton*, *Steiger* by *Fairbairn*, and *J. Brown*.

On 2 Peter: *Thomas Smith*: *Commentarius*, in his *Miscellanea*, London, 1690.

On the Epistles of John: *Lücke*, *Braune*.

On the Epistle of Jude: *Hænlein*, *Epist. Jud. Grace. Com.* Erlangen, 1709; *Jenkyne*, *Gardiner*, and *Fronmüller*.

Luther's Lectures on the Epistles of Peter and Jude, 1523–4, by *Gillet*.

(*Winer*: *Gr. N. T. Diction*, 6th ed.)

X. *Editions of the Greek New Testament.*—*Beza*; Cambridge, 1642.

Griesbach; 1804.

Lachmann; 1842 and 1850.

Tischendorf, ed. 7, *Crit. Maj.* Lipsiæ, 1859.

Tischendorf, from the Siniatic manuscript Lipsiæ, 1865.

Mai, from the Vatican MS.; London, 1859.

Bloomfield, 2 ed.; *Hahn* by *Robinson*.

Alford, with abridged notes; London, 1869.

XI. *Translations*: *The Syriac New Testament*, by *Murdock*.

Lillie's Translation of 2 Peter, the Epistles of John and Jude, and the Revelation, with notes. A. B. Union, 1854.

The Latin Vulgate : Clementine and Sixtine ed.

The New Testament in Dutch and English. A. B. Society, 1849.

New Testament in English. A. B. Union, 1865.

The original edition of 1611, by Tischendorf. Leipzig, 1869.

Rhemish New Testament, from the Vulgate. 1582.

XII. *Abbreviations.*—*A.* The Alexandrine manuscript ; supposed to be of the fifth century. The cath. epist., as found in this MS., are complete.

B. The Vatican manuscript ; supposed to be of the fourth or fifth century. The cath. epist., as found in this MS., are complete.

C. Codex rescriptus Ephræmi, of the fifth century. In it there are some deficiencies as to these epistles.

L. Codex Passionei ; of the ninth century. Also called Codex Angelicus ; and sometimes designated by *G.* It contains the text of the Acts, Pauline and Catholic epistles. As to the latter, nothing is wanting.

K. Moscow manuscript ; from the monastery of Mount Athos. Supposed to be of the ninth century. It contains the cath. epist. complete, adjuncta catena patrum.

S. The Sinaitic manuscript, discovered and edited by Tischendorf ; of the fourth century : recently designated by the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet ; but we prefer *S.*

The cursive manuscripts containing these epistles are many, but few of them have been carefully collated ; and they are designated by numeral characters, which is perfectly bewildering, affording not the least help to the memory. A better notation and a careful collation of these manuscripts, or the best of them, are desiderata ; which is commended to our brethren who have wealth and leisure, with a taste for critical investigations.

Ancient Versions : syr=Syriac (Peshito) ; cop=Coptic or

Memphitic, sah=Sahidic or Thebaic, of the third century ; vg=Vulgate, am=Jerome's version ex codice amiatino.

Ancient Commentators on Catholic Epistles : Did=Didymus of Alexandria, of the fourth century ; Oec=Oecumenius, of the tenth century, and Thph=Theophylact of the eleventh.

These versions, in consequence of their age and accuracy, are in many instances as valuable as any of the uncial manuscripts above named in settling the original text. And the same may justly be said of the commentators mentioned, with respect to the times in which they lived.

Mk., Mark ; Lk., Luke. Eng. Vers. Translation in common use.

Lit. or lit., literally.

= equivalent to ; the same as what follows.

Cf. or cf., compare.

Sept. The Septuagint, or Greek Version of Old Testament,

c. t. The common Greek text, the so-called textus receptus.

Gr. refers to words as they appear in the Greek.

XIII. *Figurative or Tropical Language*. *Authors consulted and freely used* : *Auctor ad Herennium*, in Cicero's works ; *Quintilian*, by Watson, London, 1856 ; *Blair's Lectures*, *Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric*, *Whately's Elements of Rhetoric*, *Newman's Practical System of Rhetoric*, Boston, 1832 ; *Fowler's Eng. Gr.* Part VII. ; *Beck on the Tropical Language of the New Testament*, Edinburgh, 1833 ; *McClelland's Manual of Biblical Interpretation* ; *Fairbairn's Hermeneutical Manual* ; *D. N. Lord's Laws and Characteristics of Figurative Language*, N. Y., 1855 ; *Lowth's Lectures on Hebrew Poetry* ; *Trench on the Parables*.

The following definitions and characteristics are taken chiefly from Lord's *Laws of Figurative Language*, the most accurate work on that topic known to us.

Simile, or Comparison.—A simile is an affirmation of the likeness of one thing to another, and is expressed by *as*, *like*, *so*, or some other term of resemblance. It simply

affirms that one person or thing is like another, or it indicates the nature of the likeness.

“ The tear down childhood’s cheek that flows
Is like the dewdrop on the rose ;
When first the summer breeze comes by,
And shakes the bush, the flower is dry.”

“ As from the wing no scar the sky retains ;
The parted wave no furrow from the keel ;
So dies in human hearts the thoughts of death.”

My heart is smitten, and withered like grass. Ps. 102 : 4.
Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment. Ps.
104 : 2. See also Ps. 103 : 11–13.

The doubter is like a billow of the sea, wind-driven and
tost. Jas. 1 : 6. See also 1 : 23, 24. Mat. 24 : 27.

The law of the figure : The names of the things compared
are used in their literal sense. Deny, for example, that a
child’s tear is likened to a dewdrop on the rose, or the
doubter to a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tost,
and then the propositions become perfectly meaningless :
and so in all other instances. All this is well known and
generally admitted, but too often forgotten in the interpretation
of the Sacred Scriptures.

The Metaphor.—A metaphor declares that an agent, object,
quality, or act, *is* that which it merely resembles : as,
Jehovah is my rock, my fortress, my buckler, and my high
tower. Ps. 18 : 1–2. Judah is a lion’s whelp. Gen. 49 : 9.
Joseph is a fruitful bough. Gen. 49 : 22. The tongue is a
fire. Jas. 3 : 6. Wisdom is a tree of life, etc. Prov. 3 : 18.
Thou *crownest* the year with thy goodness. Ps. 65 : 11. He
begat us with the word of truth. Jas. 1 : 18. These are
examples of metaphors completely expressed.

Elliptical metaphors : In these there is an ellipsis of the
direct affirmation that the person or thing to which the figure
is applied is that which the term used by the metaphor
denotes. The subject of the metaphorical proposition in
such cases is always known from the near connection or con-

text ; as, Go and tell that fox=tell Herod, who is a fox. Luke 13 : 32. Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom ; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah = ye princes of Israel who are rulers of Sodom, and ye Israelites who are people of Gomorrah. Isa. 1 : 10. God will smite thee, whited wall=who art a whited wall. Acts 23 : 3.

In accordance with this explication of the metaphor, it may be called an implied comparison, and a particle of similitude must be mentally supplied in order to obtain the full meaning of any metaphor : as : " Jehovah is my high tower," *i.e.*, like such a tower to me. " God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all," *i.e.*, God is like light in purity or holiness, and in Him there is no sin at all.

There is often in a metaphor an amplification of that which the person or thing is declared to be :

" Your life is a vapor, that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away." Jas. 4 : 14.

" Dan shall be a serpent by the way,
An adder in the path,
That biteth the horse heels,
So that his rider shall fall backward."

Gen. 49 : 17.

" Joseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a well,
Whose branches run over the wall."

Gen. 49 : 22.

" This is the state of man ; To-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him :
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost ;
And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening,—nips his root,
And then he falls."

Laws of the figure : 1. *The subject* of a metaphor is always used in its literal sense ; as, " I am the Light of the world." Jno. 8 : 12. Deny that by I Jesus Christ is meant, and then who or what can be spoken of ? and so in all other instan-

ces. 2. *The figure* lies wholly and only in the predicate, or what is declared of the subject ; as, “ *I am the Light of the World,*” *i.e.*, I am to men like the sun, which is the light of this world. Jno. 11 : 9. The tongue *is a fire*.

Many portions of Scripture will be obscured or perverted so long as the laws of the metaphor are disregarded. Let this matter be carefully examined, observing also by what laws the metaphors daily falling from the lips of men are regulated.

Metonymy.—Metonymy is a change in the signification of a name or noun as to things that are intimately connected with or related to one another ; and in this sense a substitution of one noun for another. By this trope the *cause*, efficient or instrumental, is used for the *effect* ; as, the Holy Spirit for His gifts, influences, and operations, whether ordinary or extraordinary. “ Quench not the Spirit.” 1 Thes. 5 : 19. “ Our gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit ;” in connection with His sanctifying operations. 1 Thes. 1 : 5. “ They have Moses and the prophets ; let them hear them :” *i.e.*, their writings. Luke 15. Progenitor for descendants ; as Jacob and Israel for Israelites, and David for the Messiah. Ezek. 34 : 23, 24 ; 37 : 24, 25, with 2 Sam. 7. The gospel is the power of God, etc., *i.e.*, God’s powerful instrument in promoting the salvation of believers. Rom. 1 : 16.

The *effect* for the *cause* : “ When Christ, our life, shall appear ;” who is the author of our life. Col. 3 : 4. The *act* or *affection* for its *object* : “ Jesus Christ, our hope.” 1 Tim. 1 : 1. Tit. 2 : 13. The *abstract* for the *concrete* term, or the quality for the person in whom it is : “ The Life was manifested ;” the Living One. 1 Jno. 1 : 2. “ In which righteousness dwelleth ;” the righteous. 2 Pet. 3 : 13. “ Ye were formerly darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord ;” once ignorant, but now divinely taught (metaphors combined with metonymies). Eph. 5 : 8. The *container* for the *contained* : as a cup for that which is in it, Luke 22 : 20 ; a house for a family, Gen. 7 : 1 ; the earth,

world, or any part of it, for its inhabitants, Ps. 96 : 1 ; Mat. 18 : 7, and 3 : 5.

The *sign* for the *thing signified*. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah," *i.e.*, the government, or chief authority among the tribes. Gen. 49 : 10. "Baptism now saves us," etc., *i.e.*, the thing signified by baptism, the cleansing or sanctification of the soul. 1 Pet. 3 : 21. Also, the *thing signified* for the *sign*. 2 Pet. 1 : 9. "Forgetful of the *cleansing* of his old sins ;" forgetful of his baptism, which represents to the eye purification from sin ; unmindful of the obligations assumed and promises made at his baptism. "This is *my covenant*," *i.e.*, the sign or token of it. Gen. 17 : 10, with ver. 11. "This is *my body*," the sign or token of it. Mat. 26 : 26.

Characteristics of the figure : 1. It consists in the peculiar use of a noun. 2. The relation is always that of causes, effects, or adjuncts.

Synecdoche.—Synecdoche is a figure by which a part of a thing is put for the whole, or the whole for a part.

"Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd
Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre."

Here heart and hands, parts of the body, are used for the whole person. See Isa. 10 : 10, 14. Swords and spears for armor in general ; ploughshares and pruning hooks for agricultural instruments. Isa. 2 : 4. "Your faith is spoken of in all the world ;" the whole for a part—in many parts of the civilized world. Rom. 1 : 8. Comp. Col. 1 : 6, 23. "Preach the Gospel to every creature ;" to all men. The law of the figure is contained in the definition.

Hyperbole.—The Hyperbole is an exhibition of things as greater or less in dimensions, more or less in number, better or worse in kind than they really are.

"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that

even the world itself could not contain (could not hold) the books that should be written." Jno. 21 : 25. If "the world" here means our material globe, then there is an hyperbole in the expressions italicized ; but if it is used by metonymy (as we suppose), then there is also a metaphor in the verb contain, and the sense is : Mankind could not take in or hold in their intellect and memory the many written narratives. What we have of the Life of Christ written by apostles and evangelists is abundantly sufficient and perspicuous. Jno. 20 : 30, 31. And there are no omissions or imaginary deficiencies in these memoirs that can be brought to light, or in any way amended, by uninspired men.

"Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams?
With ten thousand rivers of oil?"

Mic. 6 : 7.

Comp. Job 20 : 17 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 15 ; Isa. 2 : 7. "Let us build for ourselves a city and a tower, with its top in the heavens." Gen. 11 : 4 ; Comp. Deut. 1 : 28 ; 1 Ki. 1 : 40. "There was no more spirit in her," 1 Ki. 10 : 5, a hyperbolical description of her wonder and admiration. The hyperbole does not originate from a momentary conviction that the things are as described, but generally from a highly excited state of the affections. So in 1 Ki. 10 : 5 ; Gen. 11 : 4 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 15.

Peculiarity of the figure : The exaggeration or diminution is so great that no speaker or writer supposes that his expressions will be strictly taken.

Hypocatastasis, or Substitution.—A Hypocatastasis is a substitution, without a formal notice, of an act of one kind, with its object or conditions, for another, in order, by a resemblance, to exemplify that for which the substitute is used. (See Lord's Laws of Figurative Language, chap. vii.) Or thus : It is an abrupt substitution of an act, object, and condition of one kind for those of another, in a representative phrase : as, "It is hard for thee *to kick against the pricks* ;"

put without a formal notice for the folly of violently resisting God. Acts 26 : 14.

“Kings of earth stand forth,
And princes sit together,
Against Jehovah and his Messiah :
Let us tear off their bands,
And fling away from us their cords.”

Ps. 2.

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Mat. 11 : 28-30.

In these passages we have specimens of the figure, from which its chief characteristics can be elicited :

1. *The subject* of the representative phrase is used in its literal sense. “It is hard for *thee* (Saul of Tarsus) to kick against the goads” = *Thou* art so doing, and to thy great injury. So “kings of earth and princes” must be literally taken. And “all” in Mat. 11 : 28, means all there described who hear or read that most gracious invitation.

2. *The figure* lies in the predicate, or representative phrase : “kings of earth *stand forth*, or present themselves, that act being abruptly put for open opposition to Jehovah and His Christ. “And princes *sit together*, for their secret plots and devices. And so of the tearing off of bands, and flinging away of cords ; acts with their objects put without a formal notice for the most insolent rejection of the highest possible authority, that of Jehovah and His Anointed. In the Redeemer’s invitation, Come unto Me, an act of the body, or moving in space, is put for faith and love directed to Christ as the only Saviour. The toiling and burdened ones denote those who are miserable under a consciousness of the guilt and dominion of sin ; laboring under that awful load. Taking His yoke upon us, and bearing the burden He imposes, for a cheerful obedience and patient submission to His will. Christ gives us rest when He forgives and sancti-

fies us : and hence love to Him makes the yoke easy, and the burden light.

3. The resemblance indicated by the figure is one of ease or difficulty, lightness or burdensomeness, advantage or disadvantage, and other similar characteristics. It is a resemblance founded only on *acts*, their *objects*, and *conditions*.

4. The acts and conditions used by the figure are wholly different from those for which they are substituted.

Other examples may be seen in Ps. 75 : 8 ; Isa. 55 : 1 ; Deut. 32 : 40, 41 ; Jer. 2 : 13 ; Mat. 18 : 8, 9 ; Jas. 1 : 21 ; 3 : 6 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 13 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 17 ; and often elsewhere.

“ The infidel has shot his bolts away,
Till, his exhausted quiver yielding none,
He gleans the blunted shafts, that have recoiled,
And aims them at the shield of truth again.”

In the greatly controverted passage, Jno. 6 : 51-57, *eating the flesh* and *drinking the blood of the Son of man* are substitutions ; these acts of the body with their objects being put without a formal notice for acts of the mind in relation to Christ as Redeemer, *i.e.*, *for daily appropriating acts of faith in his sacrifice* ; acts by which we apply to ourselves the benefits or virtue of that sacrifice.

Belgic Confession, § 22.—“ True faith embraces Jesus Christ with all his merits, *appropriates him*, and seeks nothing more besides him” (*eumque suum ac sibi proprium efficit* ; like Paul’s “ who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal. 2 : 20).

The Apostrophe.—An apostrophe is a direct address, in a speech, argument, narrative, or prediction, to a person absent or present, living or dead, that is the subject of discourse ; or to one who hears, and is to form a judgment respecting it, as in Isa. 2 : 10 ; 5 : 3, 4 ; Mat. 23 : 37, 38.

“ Sing ye praises to Jehovah, who dwelleth in Zion ;
Declare among the nations his exploits :
That he who maketh inquisition for blood hath remembered them,
Hath not forgotten the cry of the afflicted.”

Ps. 9 : 11, 12, compared with vs. 8-10. This is a direct address to the persecuted as if present and perfectly delivered, describing their duties and privileges under the reign of Jehovah-Jesus. Comp. Ps. 9 : 8, with Acts 17 : 31.

In the apostrophe there is a peculiar mode of address to *persons*, or intelligent beings ; but in the personification *impersonal* things are variously described as persons.

The Personification.—By this figure impersonal things are variously described as persons. Or it is an ascription to them of the life, bodily organs, intelligence, affections, and actions that are peculiar to men.

1. They *are addressed* as if they were persons or human beings.

“ Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak ;
And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.” Deut. 32 : 1.

But our world and its atmosphere are not alive ; they have no ears, and cannot hear ; no affections, and cannot be astonished at the sins and follies of men ; and yet by this figure they are so endowed. In what follows they are exhorted to exult :

“ Sing, O ye heavens, for Jehovah hath done it ;
Shout, ye lower parts of the earth ;
Break forth into singing, ye mountains,
O forest, and every tree therein ;
For Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob,
And in Israel will glorify himself.” Isa. 44 : 23.

Sometimes impersonal things are introduced *as speaking* ; as in Isa. 14 : 8., Job 28 : 22. They are also described *as performing the actions of men* ; as in Isa. 55 : 12 ; Ps. 98 : 8. “ The mountains and the hills shall break out before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”

“ How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
By all their country’s wishes blest !
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod,
Than Fancy’s feet have ever trod.”

It thus clearly appears that by this figure the life, intelligence, affections, and actions that are peculiar to men, are ascribed to impersonal things. This is the sublimest form of the personification.

2. Another beautiful form or variety of the figure may be thus described : The faculties of the human mind and what results from their operations, the passions and susceptibilities, are personified : *i.e.*, they are abstractly considered, *momentarily viewed as persons, and portrayed as such*. But with this peculiarity : When the faculties, mental acquisitions, and affections of men are thus viewed, they are then addressed, or described as acting, *according to their several natures*.

“ Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning infamy.”

Gray.

Here the principal figures are personifications ; *ambition*, *scorn*, and *infamy*. Ambition, as the chief idol-god is by a metaphor described as a tempter ; scorn and infamy as inferior idols or gods, the former being metaphorically designated as bitter or cruel. Rising and whirling the wretch from high are substitutions for an unexpected and irrecoverable loss of honor ; and the purpose for which he is hurled from high is metaphorically described as a sacrifice to scorn and infamy.

“ O memory ! thou fond deceiver,
Still importunate and vain ;
To former joys recurring ever,
And turning all the past to pain.”

Goldsmith.

Collins's poem, entitled “ The Passions, An Ode for Music,” is an admirable example of the personification of a susceptibility, and of the mental affections.

The same peculiarity sometimes pertains to material things, and seasons, when personified ; as in Milton's address to Light (*Paradise Lost*, Book 3) ; Cowper's address to Winter, and Evening (*The Task*, Book 4) ; and in the following from Thomson :

“Ye too, ye winds ! that now begin to blow
 With boisterous sweep, I raise my voice to you.
 Where are your stores, ye powerful beings ! say,
 Where your aërial magazines reserved,
 To swell the brooding terrors of the storm ?
 In what far distant region of the sky,
 Hush’d in deep silence, sleep ye when ’tis calm ?”

3. Another form of this figure, but seldom used, may be mentioned : a personification *in the form of a narrative*, a sort of parabolic personification, or fable ; as in Jud. 9 : 8–15. In this discourse of Jotham, the motion, intelligence, and choice that are characteristic of men living in political society are attributed to the olive, the fig tree, the vine, and the bramble. Comp. 2 Ki. 14 : 9. In Prov. 9 : 1–6, there is a personification of Wisdom in the form of a narrative ; and so of Folly in the subsequent verses, 13–17.

The Allegory, .or Parable.—The Allegory consists in the use of intelligent beings acting in one sphere or relation, to exemplify and illustrate their own or the agencies of others in another sphere or relation ; or in the use of unintelligent agents or objects in a natural or imagined relation, to exemplify the conduct of men. They are sometimes employed together. See Isa. 5 ; Ps. 80 ; 2 Sam. 12 : 1–6 ; Mat. 13.

Some of the Parables of the New Testament are allegories, strictly so called, as the Parable of the Sower and the Tares of the field ; others are similes or comparisons, as that of the Mustard Seed.

Laws : 1. Intelligent agents in one sphere or relation are used to represent intelligent agents in another. 2. The agency in the descriptive part is always spoken of as already exerted. 3. Agents, objects, acts, and effects in one sphere represent agents, objects, acts, and effects in another. 4. It is preceded or followed by an indication of the persons whom it is employed to represent. (There are no allegories in the Catholic Epistles.)

Literal, how distinguished from figurative language.—It is no hard matter to distinguish literal from tropical language ; for in any and every proposition the language is

literal, when the subject and predicate agree ; or when what is declared of the subject is perfectly compatible with its nature : *e.g.*, “ *God created the heavens and the earth.*” When the subject and predicate of a proposition do not agree, or when what is declared of the subject is perfectly incompatible with its nature, the language is *tropical*, or *figurative* : as, “ *O God, thou art my rock, my fortress, my high tower.*”

We have set forth the above definitions, characteristics, and illustrations of figurative language, for three reasons : 1. No clear and accurate exposition of such language can be given without an understanding of the laws of each figure : and a firm adherence to such laws in the interpretation. 2. There are many figures in the Catholic Epistles, especially in those of James, Peter, and Jude ; and this work may fall into the hands of those who have never read a treatise on that subject. 3. To enable the reader to test for himself the accuracy or deficiencies of the elucidations of tropical language in the following commentary.

The relations on which rhetorical figures are founded are very few. 1. That of resemblance, particular or general. The *particular likeness existing between persons and things* is either formally expressed, as in the simile, or implied, as in the metaphor. The *particular likeness of different acts, their objects and conditions*, as to facility and difficulty, profit and loss, and the like accompaniments, is exhibited by the substitution. And the *general likeness* arising from agents and their agency in one sphere representing the conduct of men in another, appears in the allegory. 2. The relations of causes, effects, and adjuncts, as in the metonymy. 3. That of a whole to a part, or a part to a whole, as in the synecdoche. 4. The relation of degree, or the excessive ascription of natural qualities to any person or thing, as in the hyperbole. In fabricating these figures, the imagination employs the understanding as its instrument.

Irony is a sort of mockery or ridicule, by which what is

said is the opposite of what is meant : as, " Cry aloud ; for he is a god," etc. " Beautifully ye set aside the commandment of God, to keep your own tradition" ! " Thou actest beautifully. Even the demons believe it, and shudder." 1 Ki. 18 : 27. Mark 7 : 9. Jas. 2 : 19.

It is a dangerous sword, and should never be used by the hand of the malicious ; and rarely by the holiest of men, and then only to expose to public disgrace the most indisputable sin and folly : as in the instances alleged. Whether we call it a grammatico-logical or rhetorical figure, the relation on which it is founded is that of contrast.

The other tropes proceed from the powerful working of the affections on the imagination : the speaker or writer, by the apostrophe, disregarding time and place, suddenly turns from the indirect to the direct discourse ; or directly and sometimes vehemently addresses the subjects of his discourse, whether present or absent, living or dead. And in a sublimer way he makes any impersonal thing live, speak and act, with the intelligence and passions of men.

The principal figure in any proposition or propositions should be carefully distinguished from the auxiliary figures, or those employed to beautify the description. The principal figure, for example, in the preceding extract from Thompson is a personification ; the auxiliary figures are elliptical metaphors, viz., " stores," " magazines reserved," " brooding"—only used to garnish the personification. (Compare Personification, 2. Extract from Gray.)

A combination of tropes should also be carefully noticed ; as in Eph. 5 : 8, where *darkness* and *light* are metonymies of the abstract for the concrete terms, darkened and enlightened ; while the other expressions, " Ye *were* once darkness, but now light in the Lord," show that metaphors are also contained in the passage.

The figures daily used by the learned and unlearned are formed according to the laws above stated.

COMMENTARY.

CHAPTER I.

Synopsis of Contents :

I. External Temptations, or tests of what is good in believers, and how they should behave in the midst of them, 2-12.

1. Count them matter of pure joy, or occasions of exultation.

2. Let your patience under them work perfectly.

3. Ask from God, with an unshaken faith, the wisdom needed in such trials.

4. Let the brother that is low exult in his high privileges ; but the rich, in the possession of humility.

5. Conclusion of the topic, or the reward promised to the patient and persevering.

II. Internal Temptations, or tests of what is evil in man, 13-18.

1. These proceed not from God, who is absolutely and immutably holy.

2. They originate from man's own lust.

3. There is a perfect absurdity in supposing God to be the author of our sins ; on the contrary, He is the author of all good, and especially of all the holiness that is in mankind.

III. True Religion begins with the regeneration of the soul by the word of truth, 18.

IV. Duties of those who profess to be so renewed, 19-25.

1. Be eager to hear the word of truth, deliberate in speaking of it, and gentle to opponents.

2. In meekness receive the ingrafted word.

3. Obey as well as hear it.

V. True religion cannot exist in the heart, if the tongue of the professor be unbridled ; nor can it so exist without practical benevolence, and abstinence from the polluting sins of worldly men, 26, 27.

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

As to the author of the epistle and the persons addressed, see the Introduction. *Servant*, or bondman : one wholly and willingly devoted to the service of God and the Lord Jesus Christ ; bound to them by the cords of love. It is an official title, as in Gal. 1 : 10 ; Col. 4 : 12, with 1 : 7.

Ministers of Christ may here be briefly reminded of their duties : They should strive to obtain a clear and accurate knowledge of revealed truth. 1 Tim. 4 : 13-16 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17 ; Mat. 13 : 51, 52. They should explain it, as far as in them lies, in that order and proportion in which it is exhibited in Scripture, or "rightly divide the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2 : 15. By it strive to win souls for Christ, establish believers, and refute gainsayers. Acts 14 : 1 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 1-4 ; Tit. 1 : 9. Pray always for the present and eternal well-being of those for whom they labor. Col. 4 : 12. Be an example to others in all holy living. 1 Tim. 4 : 12 ; Tit. 2 : 7. Be deterred from performing their duties by no dangers or difficulties. Mat. 10 : 28 ; Acts 20 : 24. In the discharge of all our duties we must honor the Father and His incarnate Son. The great motive should be love to God and Christ. Jno. 21 : 15-17 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 14, 15. *The Lord Jesus Christ*, our Adonai Jesus Messiah ; or Jesus the Christ our Lord, *i.e.*, supreme governor. He is such by right of creation, conservation and redemption. Col. 1 : 16-22. A tyrannical spirit is highly unbecoming His servants. Mat. 20 : 25-28 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 3.

Which are scattered abroad, lit. that are in the dispersion.

The dispersion of the Israelites in all lands is “a standing miracle of the truth of Christianity ;” a demonstration of the inspiration of Moses and the prophets ; an unequivocal proof of God’s veracity and justice.

And the present epistle is an unmistakable indication that God has not wholly forsaken them, but that even in this dispensation He has his own elect among them, 2 : 5 ; Rom. 11 : 1-7 ; while in the age to come all Israel shall be saved, Rom. 11 : 25-27 ; Mat. 19 : 28.

The disciples of Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, are “the salt of the earth ;” but if they become inconsistent in life, and careless in maintaining the truth, what is to prevent the moral putrefaction of mankind ? What profit, then, will their dispersed residences in the world be ?

Greeting : James to the twelve dispersed tribes wisheth *joy* ; every kind of happiness, all bliss. The courtesy of inspired men is not feigned, but a true expression of love and good will. James uses the common form of salutation in Greek, Acts 23 : 26, but in the sense of the Hebrew *shālom*=peace, all blessedness. And they who give it an inferior signification, have done so without considering how natural it must have been for James to use the Greek word as equivalent to the Hebrew one. Comp. Acts 15 : 23 ; 2 Jno. 10, 11 vs. Gr. (James in the original corresponds to the Heb. *Ἰακώβ*.)

² My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations ; ³ knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

My brothers, an elliptical metaphor, equivalent to Ye who are my brothers, *i.e.*, like brothers ; brother Israelites believing in Christ. See vs. 3, 18, 19, and 2 : 1. In our idiom, well rendered by *brethren*. *Count it all joy*, esteem it a matter or occasion of joy, and of that only ; *joy*, by metonymy of the effect for the incidental cause, or occasion of promoting it : *when ye fall into*, among, or are suddenly surrounded by, *divers temptations*. (The same verb

with the dative in Luke 10 : 30.) There is a metaphor in the verb, and the sense is : When various temptations suddenly surround you like an armed band.

Temptations : That which tests what is good or evil in men, draws it forth and exercises it, is a temptation, or trial. Here it is used for the testing and eliciting of what is good in believers. God by external trials tests such, in order to draw out and strengthen the graces of His Spirit within them. So He tempted Abraham. Gen. 22 : 1. *Knowing that the proof of your faith worketh patience* ; since ye know that this way or means of proving your faith (by various trials) produces patience ; not by any natural process, but by the sanctifying Spirit, training thereby the human spirit. Heb. 12 : 11. *Patience* is perseverance in obeying God under all trials and difficulties. *Knowing* is a causal participle, as in ver. 18.

The duty enjoined : Esteem it an occasion of pure joy, when suddenly surrounded by various trials.

The trials sent by God for our good, or those under His control, are various. They often proceed from those of our own household ; from misplaced friendship ; from ungodly neighbors ; from false brethren ; from perverters of the truth ; from insolent and slanderous tongues ; from difficulties in obtaining a temporal support ; from official cares and duties ; and sometimes from the loss of all earthly goods, banishment, and the sure prospect of a violent death. See 2 Cor. 11 ; 23-28 ; Heb. 10 : 32-34 ; Jno. 16 : 2.

Insensibility to pain and sorrow is not presupposed, for then they would cease to be trials. A patient must feel the knife while the cancer is being removed, unless voluntarily rendered insensible. 1 Pet. 1 : 6 ; Heb. 12 : 11. But dejection and despondency arising from various trials are here by implication forbidden.

The motive : Since ye know that this proof of your faith worketh patience. Esteem them occasions of pure joy. For these various trials are like a furnace to consume dross and refine gold ; designed by God to subdue evil passions,

and to render conspicuous to yourselves and others the graces of His Spirit. Isa. 48 : 10 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 7.

Thus in particular faith, the principal grace of the renewed soul, is tested by Him ; its genuineness demonstrated, and its holy energy shown, beyond all doubt. " Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Job 13 : 15.

So also patience springs from faith ; cheerful obedience and humble submission to His will, or patient continuance in well-doing unto the end.

Accordingly, we see that a sanctified intellect judges of trials from their gracious effects ; and thus viewed, they furnish occasions and materials of pure joy ; of holy gladness, not of sinful despondency. For as many as are our trials, so many are the means which God employs to sanctify us.

Ignorance or forgetfulness of our Father's intention in this matter is the proximate cause of sorrow and dejection ; but a knowledge and recollection of it throw light on the darkest clouds.

How many tremblingly ask, Is my faith genuine ? Rejoice, then, that it is put to the proof amidst various trials. If you hold fast your confidence in God and Christ under all storms without murmuring or repining, you might as well doubt of your existence as of your faith and patience.

They who are stupidly indifferent to the results of trials in their case, or who rage among them like a wild bull in a net, are not the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We write the Greek in italics, because of our distance from the press : S. has *dokimeion*=*dokimion*, as in B. and in S., 1 Pet. 1 : 7 ; a mere variation in spelling, of no more importance than height, or hight (as Milton spelled it), in English. We take *dokimion* in the sense of *proof*, *i.e.*, medium of proof, means or instrument of proving, as in the Sept. Prov. 27 : 21. Compare 1 Pet. 1 : 7, Gr. To understand it of the result, is forced. In Rom. 5 : 4, *dokimē* is=effect of proof, or *experience* as the result of patience ; a practical knowledge of the operations of the Spirit within us, obtained during a steadfast endurance of trials. *Hu-*

pomonné, pr. a staying under ; hence patience, or steadfast endurance ; not throwing off the cross, but bearing it ; staying under the burden, while walking in the narrow way.

^a But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Duty enjoined : Let patience be exercised to the highest possible degree ; which is its *perfect work*, its unhindered or complete action. Or, let it work perfectly.

That patience which holds out but a little while, or in a few trials, is very imperfect. “ If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.” Prov. 24 : 10.

Patience works perfectly, when it shows itself in every trial, and in all the circumstances attending it ; when it continues as long as the trials ; gives no quarter to fretfulness, which is murmuring against God, but rejoices that He is by His Spirit making us meet for our portion of the inheritance of the saints consisting in light. Acts 14 : 22 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 6, 7.

The *motive* by which it is enforced : *In order that ye may be perfect and entire, in nothing deficient ; i.e.*, that ye may obtain that comparative perfection, or maturity in holiness, which is designed for you by God.

Perfect and entire : *perfect* or fullgrown is opposed to imperfect or undeveloped ; *entire*, to deficient or mutilated. *Wanting nothing*, or *in nothing deficient* ; destitute of no Christian virtue.

In every renewed soul there is a perfection of parts, or entireness, so that even a babe in Christ has all the virtues characteristic of a believer implanted within him, though yet imperfect in degree, or undeveloped. 1 Cor. 3 : 1 ; Heb. 5 : 13.

Some of the saints, however, when compared with others, are not only *entire*, having in germ every grace of the Spirit, but *perfect* or *fullgrown*. They are men (as the word is rendered, 1 Cor. 14 : 20) while others are children, in

knowledge, faith, patience, and self-government 1 Cor. 2 : 6 ; Jas. 3 : 2 ; Heb. 5 : 14.

"Perfect and entire, wanting nothing," are metaphors : that ye may be like men fullgrown in the whole body, and without a blemish in any part. The best translation is, *fullgrown and entire, in nothing deficient*.

To attain this comparative perfection, this maturity in holiness, should be the constant aim of all believers ; and it is one great end which our Lord had in view in appointing the Christian ministry. 2 Pet. 1 : 5-7 ; 3 : 18 ; Eph. 4 : 13-15.

Comparative perfection is one thing, sinless perfection is another. While we should ever pant after and struggle to obtain sinless perfection, Mat. 5 : 48, we should never be so foolish as to suppose that we have already obtained it. 1 Jno. 1 : 8 ; Phil. 3 : 12-14.

If we are destitute of patience, an essential virtue of the renewed soul is wanting ; and if so, what is our profession of Christianity worth ? If our patience works very imperfectly, how can we honor Christ, and exult in the gracious results of afflictions ? Only when patience works perfectly, do we become men in Christ.

⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not ; and it shall be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. ⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord ; ⁸ a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Wisdom is equivalent to piety or righteousness, 3 : 17, 18 ; here it means that manifestation of it which is needed and required in various trials. *But if any of you is deficient in wisdom (if with the indicative taking the fact for granted),* is conscious that he has not that degree of piety which will enable him to esteem his various trials, materials, or occasions of gladness, and that his patience does not work perfectly. *Let him ask it from the God who giveth to all lib-*

erally, etc. *To all*, to all asking rightly, vs. 6, 7. *Liberally*: Gr. *simply*, i.e., without duplicity; with singleness of intention, or from the pure love of giving: and hence liberally: ver. 17. Compare the cognate adjective and noun, Mat. 6:22; 2 Cor. 1:12; 2 Cor. 8:12. *And upbraideth not*: never reminding us, like men, of past favors; never reproaching us for the frequency or importunity of our petitions, but ever delighted in bestowing new and richer benefits. *Nothing doubting*, and *he that doubteth*, as in Acts 10:20; Rom. 14:23. "Wavering," "wavereth," though exact as to the sense, are as translations objectionable, since the original has a simile only, and of such beauty as to need no extra metaphorical garnishing. *Any thing from the Lord*, any thing asked or prayed for; since God in this world is kind even to the unthankful and prayerless. The eighth verse is a further explanation of "that man," or "he that doubteth," which is indicated above by the mode of punctuation. *A double-minded man*—an elliptical metaphor; acting as if he had two souls; his affections ever moving, like a pendulum, between God and the world, Christ and Satan. Mat. 6:24. *Unstable in all his ways*: not fixed, not permanently moving in any of the roads he takes; by substitution for Fickle and inconstant in his whole mode of thinking and acting. Such men are like humming birds, sipping slightly and ever on the wing; like billows of the sea driven hither and thither by contrary winds.

How is the wisdom needed in various trials to be obtained? It is a precious gift that can come only from God, and must be sought from Him by prayer. The *motives* are derived from God's unspeakable goodness and faithfulness. "God is love," and "He that promised is faithful."

But in order to obtain it, we must pray *in faith, nothing doubting*. The faith here spoken of is a firm persuasion of the willingness of God to give the wisdom promised; v. 5, of his fidelity in that particular. With no doubt in the mind as to the fulfilment of the Divine promise; or the desirableness of the wisdom promised; or the efficacy of prayer as a

means to attain it ; and with no hesitation as to the question whether or not we should ask it from God. As to these things, prayer in faith excludes doubting.

This wisdom should be asked for with undoubting confidence ; (1.) “ *for* he that doubteth,” etc.; inasmuch as such a doubter is agitated and restless, tormented with his own indecision and distrust ; his intellect not fastened to revealed truth, but tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. (2.) The second motive will become more perspicuous by a transposition : “ For let not that human being, a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways, suppose that he shall receive anything from the Lord.” It is irrational to suppose that the Lord will hear the prayers of one whose affections are divided and unsettled, whose volitions constantly change, whose heart is not fixed or stayed on Himself, the alone proper object of our highest adoration, love, and obedience.

In what is the imperfection of many more manifest than in the cultivation and exhibition of that wisdom which consists in an intelligent and joyful submission to the discipline of God ! To all who feel their need of it—and who does not?—how precious and cheering is the infallible promise here expressed ! Let us, then, by praying in faith “ take hold of God’s strength,” and it shall be ours.

⁹ Let the brother of low degree rejoice (marg. glory) in that he is exalted ; ¹⁰ but the rich, in that he is made low, because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. ¹¹ For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth : so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

Directions to poor and rich believers in the peculiar trials by which they are surrounded.

Moreover, let the brother who is low, of low estate or degree, poor and in obscurity, as in Luke 1 : 52, exult in his highness ; height, elevated position or exaltation ; his high rank as a child of God and heir of eternal glory ; compare vs. 12, 18, and 2 : 5. Let him be content to be low in the

judgment of the world, while high in his relation to God ; a beautiful paradox. Let him rejoice greatly in the latter, and duly estimate the former. *But the rich, in his lowness ;* (Eccl. 10 : 6) depression, low estate, as in Luke 1 : 48 ; or *in his being made low*. Let him exult in that. (See on Jas. 4 : 10.) *Low*, for poor and obscure ; *height*, for eminent and exalted privileges ; *being made low*, for humility or poverty of spirit. *Brother*, expressed in the 9th verse, should be supplied after *rich*, in vs. 10, 11 ; the professed believer who is rich, and, as a consequence of it, flattered by many. *A burning heat* is not the immediate effect of the rising of the sun ; the word here denotes *a burning wind* (a wind scorching like fire), which in Oriental countries sometimes attends the rising of the sun. See Jon. 4 : 8, with Gen. 41 : 6 ; Ezek. 17 : 10. *So also shall the rich brother in his journeys fade away* ; speedily, like a sun-smitten and wind-blasted flower. *His journeys* ; one of the many begun for the attainment of health, increasing wealth, and pleasure ; or, for the honor of God and the good of his brethren. *As soon as the sun hath arisen with a burning wind, it withereth*, etc. "The grace of the fashion of it," is a clumsy expression ; lit. *the beauty of its face*, its external comeliness.

Various trials of the brother who is low : James does not refer to those trials which beset all the poor, but to those which are peculiar to the believer ; their being despised and persecuted by the world, especially the ungodly rich, 2 : 5, 6, and even lightly esteemed, as they often suppose whether rightly or not, by their brothers in the family of God ; the great temptations or trials arising from their state of dishonor within the house, and their cruel treatment without. The proper corrective for all this is a constant consideration of their high dignity as children of God and heirs of eternal life, ver. 12, the honor that comes from Him is the greatest and best of all honors. Ever meditate on that, and so fill your hearts with joy. Let this holy exultation, arising from gratitude to God, take out the sting infixed by a

brother's hand, as well as blunt the edge of a persecutor's sword.

Various trials which beset the brother who is rich : He especially is exposed to pride, trusting in uncertain riches, and want of practical benevolence. 1 Tim. 6 : 17, 18.

For which the proper corrective is the possession and constant cultivation of humility ; for that will last for ever, while all external distinctions and honors in the world as it now is will speedily disappear, like a sun-smitten and wind-blasted flower.

James especially alludes to the bringing down of pride : Let the rich brother exult in lowliness of spirit. And how necessary such an exhortation is, we may learn from the manifold trials which our Lord sent upon Paul, even after he had received from his Saviour unprecedented visions and revelations concerning the blessedness of glorified spirits in heaven. 2 Cor. 12.

The first *de* is transitive ; the second, adversative. Let the brother, etc., *exult*, greatly rejoice ; holy exultation (as in 2 : 13), proceeding from gratitude to God, is denoted ; but in 3 : 14, cf. 4 : 16, *to boast*=a sinful exultation, proceeding from a fanatical zeal and selfish ambition. Eng. Vers. "glory," "boast," thrice "rejoice," and once "joy." Lit. The sun *arose*—*withered* the grass—its flower *fell off*—the beauty of its face *perished* : the withering, etc., immediately followed the rising of the sun with its burning wind ; but this, according to our idiom, is well expressed in E. V. *A burning wind*, Sept. Job 27 : 21 ; cf. Jer. 18 : 17 ; Ezek. 17 : 10. *Journeys*, Sept. Neh. 2 : 5 ; Jon. 3 : 3, 4. *In his journeys shall fade away*, if the exigency of the passage required it, might mean, Shall pine away by sudden sickness in the midst of his resources or wealth obtained by travelling, 4 : 13. But such a metonymy of the instrumental cause for the effect is in this expression certainly strained. The explanation above given is more obvious and natural. S. has *porias*, a mere orthographical variation. B. C. and other MSS. have *poreias*. *Beauty* or comeliness, see Sept. Lam. 1 : 6 ; Ps. 49 : 2 (E. V. Ps. 50 : 2). The Dutch N. T. vs. 9, 10 : In zijne hoogheid—in zijne vernedering=in his highness—in his down-bringing.

¹² Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Conclusion of the topic begun at the second verse ; or the reward promised to the patient and persevering. *Happy is the man that endureth temptation ;* patiently and steadfastly beareth it ; the present tense denoting his perpetual conflicts, and the noun in the singular number the diversified trials of his whole life, since all together constitute but one great temptation, or test of the state of his heart towards God and Christ. (Deut. 8 : 2, 5.) *When he has been proved,* tested and proved to be a true believer, vs. 2, 3 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 7 ; not during the trial, but after it. The crown *of life*, the crown inseparably connected with life ; a holy, blessed and everlasting existence. Rev. 2 : 10 ; Mat. 7 : 14. This is *the promised reward*, or blessedness. A crown presupposes a kingdom, 2 : 5, and a king to wear the crown. Compare Rev. 1 : 6. The *receiving* of a crown presupposes a giver of it, even *the Lord, i.e.,* Jesus Christ, Jas. 5 : 7, our Redeemer, the Prince of the kings of the earth. Rev. 1 : 5. Our sinless life as disembodied spirits begins when we depart to be with Christ. Luke 23 : 43 ; Phil. 1 : 23. But the crown of life, the consummation of our holy joy, the signal and full reward with body and soul glorified, when we shall act as coregents of Christ, is to be received only at the second coming of our Lord. 2 Tim. 4 : 8 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 4 ; Jas. 5 : 7, 8 ; Rev. 5 : 9, 10. The reception of a crown, by substitution, for the obtaining of royal authority ; and that crown is to be inseparably connected with Life ; a holy, blessed and everlasting activity as coregents of Christ. Rev. 20 : 6 ; 22 : 5 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 12 ; Gr. Rom. 8 : 17, 23. (See on 2 : 5.)

This reward is *only and wholly of grace*. 1 Pet. 1 : 13 : for we *receive* it as a gift ; and it originated in God's *promise* given us in our legal representative before the world began. Tit. 1 : 2. Besides, God in Christ and by the efficacy of the Spirit is the author and sustainer of our holy life now, and will be so in all its manifestations to all eternity. Eph. 2 : 4-10 ; Col. 3 : 3, 4 ; Rev. 22 : 1.

The *certainty of its reception* is put beyond intelligent

doubt by the fact that He who cannot lie *has promised* it ; often and by various modes of revelation.

To whom is it promised ? To him who endureth temptation, who with joyful patience submits to the wise discipline of God ; to them that love Him. Rom. 8 : 28. Love to God, or to His incarnate Son, when genuine, is a supreme and undying love. Eph. 6 : 24 ; Gr. Mat. 10 : 37. It also includes a holy admiration of and delight in their perfections, mingled with gratitude, adoration, and reverence. And this love is ever connected with and followed by persevering patient obedience.

The perfect rectitude also of the Lord in giving the crown of life to such, appears from the fact that it is done only after their love and patience have been unmistakably tested and proved.

This is one great reason why believers are subjected to various trials, why their whole life here is one continued struggle. By their invincible and glad perseverance in such a contest, God not only gives unquestionable demonstrations that they truly love Him, to themselves and others on earth, but also to the principalities and authorities in the heavenly worlds, and to Satan and his angels. The regenerated thus become "a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men." And hence the Lord will be manifested as "glorious in holiness," when He rewards them with the crown of life. The intelligent universe will see and acknowledge that the right persons have been selected to wear it. 1 Cor. 4 : 9.

The narrative concerning the trial of Job gives us significant hints in this matter, 1 : 6-12 ; 2 : 1-6 ; Jas. 5 : 11. And who now in heaven, earth, or hell can doubt his integrity ? Who will question the justice of the Redeemer when He crowns His proved servant in the great day of His appearing ? 19 : 25-27.

Anēr is=*anthrōpos*, vs. 7, 8. And here the former is defined by the clause following it ; a man *that endureth temptation* ; so also in ver. 8, A man *with two souls*, or double-minded. *When he has been proved*,

or, after he has been proved ; *dokimos genomenos* : tested and proved by enduring temptation, as gold in the fire ; and hence *approved* (as elsewhere rendered), perceived and acknowledged as genuine. 1 Cor. 11 : 19 ; 2 Cor. 10 : 18. *The Lord* hath promised, K L Thph Oec : vg syr cop, *God* hath promised : A B S, *he* hath promised. The crown *of life* : the genitive of the characteristic quality, or inseparable property. So also in 2 Tim. 4 : 8, " the crown of *righteousness*," 1 Pet. 5 : 4, " the unfading crown *of glory* "; i.e., united with holiness and honor in them that receive it. Lit., " which the Lord *promised* "; referring to the promise as extant in scriptural prophecy ; or written and recorded by prophets and apostles.

¹³ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God : for God cannot be tempted with evil (margin, *evils*), neither tempteth He any man : ¹⁴ but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin : and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. ¹⁶ Do not err, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Internal temptations, or tests of what is evil in man. 1. The subject negatively stated, in refutation of an objection. *Let no one when tempted say, " I am tempted from God ; "* for *God is not temptable in respect of evil things, and He Himself tempteth no one.*

Tempted, induced to commit sin. The meaning of the objection is : The purpose and appointments of God are the remote cause of my sinning : it must be traced up to Him as the indirect but real source.

To this James replies : This attempted explication of the matter is wholly incompatible with the nature of God. If true, He would be an almighty Satan. But *God is not temptable in respect of evil things* : He is so absolutely and immutably holy that it is impossible for Him to be at all influenced by anything that is morally evil, or sinful : compare 1 Jno. 1 : 5. *And he himself tempteth no one*, and in fact God Himself excites and incites none to sin.

God is not the direct nor indirect author of sin. Not the

direct instigator or producer of it in any, for "God is Light and in Him there is no darkness at all." But how can He who is absolutely and immutably holy suggest any sinful thought to any intelligent being, in any world, and at any time?

He is not the indirect author of it ; it is not through influences or appointments proceeding from Him, not from His purpose or providential arrangements towards us, as is supposed in the objection ; for, unless we irrationally hold that He is destitute of wisdom and holiness, all the arrangements that proceed from His purpose must, to all intelligences, be righteously and perfectly adapted to their peculiar nature and character.

Let us then be content to know that God, since there is no sin at all in Him, cannot be the infuser of it directly, or the promoter of it indirectly. No temptation to do wrong can by any possibility reach Him : and since no inclination to moral evil ever has, will, or can be felt within Him, how is it possible for Him to communicate or suggest to another that which is not in Himself?

The futility of the objection further appears from the fact that the purpose and providential arrangements of God as to sin are of such a nature as to show His immaculate holiness. He *permits* sin to be done by others, or in many instances does not hinder them from committing it. Mat. 6 : 13 ; Acts 14 : 16. He *limits* it in various ways ; as by subduing the intention of men to commit it, or by preventing the execution of their purpose. Gen. 20 : 6 ; 1 Sam. 25 : 26 ; Ps. 76 : 10 ; and by *overruling it*, when committed, *for good*. Gen. 50 : 20 ; Acts 2 : 23. His purpose also relates to the *giving up* of incorrigible sinners to their own sinful desires and volitions. Rom. 1 : 24, 26 ; Hos. 4 : 17. God blinds the eyes and hardens the hearts of men (permits them to be so blinded and hardened) not by any positive act of his own, or influence proceeding from Himself, but by judicially abandoning them, by leaving them to themselves, that is, to the sway of their own inordinate desires and

passions ; but this only after long forbearance with them. Jno. 12 : 40 ; Rom. 9 : 18, 22.

Now, what is the objection worth, unless it can be proved that darkness comes from light, an unholy disposition from the Holy God ? No matter where men live, when, among whom, or by what physical discomforts surrounded ; there is their evil disposition : God did not put it in them ; and He in infinite benevolence restrains it in innumerable instances, overrules it for good, and never abandons any to the control of their evil disposition until their incorrigibility is perfectly demonstrated, and that to all who are spectators of their malignant passions and actions. Let us, then, hallow God in our hearts, while we repeat a part of the sublime song of Moses. Deut. 32 : 3, 4.

“ For the name of Jehovah will I publish :
Ascribe ye greatness to our God.
The Rock ! perfect is His work ;
For all His ways are judgment :
A God of truth and without iniquity,
Just and right is He.”

2. The positive statement : *But each one is tempted, when by his own lust drawn away and enticed.*

Lust, sin, and death are personified : *drawn away* or *out*, and *enticed* or *baited*, are metaphors ; seduced from the right path, and by a present seeming good, the bait of pleasure. *Each one*, every human being separately considered. *By his own lust*, or inordinate desire, as the proper, direct, and efficient cause. The sense is : When any one is drawn out of the path of duty by the influence of his passions, and his understanding is enticed or beguiled by the exhibition of apparent good, then is he tempted, or induced to sin, and his own lust is the harlot that tempts him to disobey God.

The main truth thus far taught is, that not the decree or allotments of God, but man's own inordinate desire, is the true cause of his sinning. It is in vain to look for a cause from without, when one is ever working within ; a cause adequate or sufficient to explain the effects.

Then lust, having conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin when completed (or full grown) produceth death. First lust draws away and entices by a present seeming good ; then *the will consents* to or embraces lust, and so lust conceives, and having conceived she brings forth sin, that is, *actual sin*, sin in word and deed. *And sin when finished*, completed, full grown, or fully manifested, produces and thrusts forth *death*, everlasting misery, the opposite of eternal life. Rom. 6 : 23.

The positive statement, then, includes the following :

(a.) *Every one's own lust*, or longing after what God has forbidden, is the direct efficient cause of his sinning ; no matter what peculiar form that lust may assume, or of what kind it may be ; or how the understanding is thereby deceived.

(b.) *Volition* follows, the consent of the will, or the determination to obtain, if possible, the thing longed for.

(c.) Then *actual sin*, or sinning in word and deed.

(d.) Next *the growth* of sinful desires by the daily indulgence of them until actual sin is in all respects fully manifested.

(e.) Then *the final issue*, everlasting misery.

Thus we see that the inspired writers in the use of figurative language not only please the imagination, but enlighten the understanding, pierce the conscience, and aid the memory in holding fast and recollecting the truth.

3. The last argument in refutation of the objection is contained in vs. 16, 17. There is a perfect absurdity in supposing God to be in any way the author of our sins ; on the contrary, He is the author of all good, and of that only ; which is proved to perfection by His perpetual gifts to sinful men ; and especially by the fact that He is the author of all the holiness that is in any of mankind, 18.

Do not err, etc. Be not led astray, or deceived. Take care that, by your own speculations on this subject or the instructions of others, ye be not led to the brink of an awful precipice. *All kind giving*, everything that shows by

the way in which it is bestowed the loving heart of the giver, *and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights*, the creator of the luminaries or heavenly worlds, *with whom there is no change or shadow of turning*. The Creator of all other worlds is the munificent and perpetual benefactor of rebels in this world.

Every perfect gift, precisely adapted to us as men and as sinners: the complete provision for our temporal wants, and all the means of grace. *Father*, an elliptical metaphor = from Him who is the Father, *i.e.*, Creator, as in Mal. 2 : 10 ; Heb. 12 : 9 ; cf. Gen. 2 : 4. *Lights*, by metonymy, for the light-bearers, the stars or heavenly worlds. Ps. 136 : 7. Or *shadow of turning*, giving not the slightest indication of change, but perfectly immutable. *Coming down*: as plentiful rain and showers from the clouds, so every thing kindly given and every complete gift descend to us from God: *giving* by metonymy for gift.

After the explication of this most important paragraph, it will not be amiss to add a few suggestions :

James is not here speaking of the origin of moral evil, of its first springing up in the minds of angels or in the first parents of mankind ; nor of the reasons why God did not hinder or prevent its entrance into or uprising in their minds. That is a topic which is beyond the reach of our faculties ; it cannot be comprehended or perfectly understood by us in this world—and perhaps in no other. But, in answer to an objection, James clearly shows how the sins which men daily commit originate, and go on to their full development and ultimate result.

The origin of evil, as just now stated, belongs to Natural theology ; it presses on all who believe in God and His moral government. Revealed theology shows how sin entered into the world, and the manner in which men may be delivered from it. Gen. 3 ; Rom. 5. Let a ladder be thrown to a building on fire, and at an open window. Now, what would be said of a man who would not avail himself of that means of deliverance until the origin of the fire was

fully explained to him? And what will be said of us, if we reject the only Saviour, and lay the fault of our sins upon God?

Many desires and passions are neither virtuous nor vicious, but merely natural or human; that is, essential to, and inseparable from, man's bodily and mental constitution; as curiosity, or the desire to increase in knowledge; hope, or the desire and expectation of future good, and the like. But our desire for good must be regulated by the law of God written in Scripture, and impressed on the conscience; that is, intelligent moral agents must control their desires and passions by the will of God and the law of their nature, and not be ruled by instinct and desire as the supreme law, like the brutes.

The Romanists say that concupiscence or lust, apart from the consent of the will, does not partake of the nature of sin. But James is not speaking of merely natural human desires, but of inordinate ones. Conscience testifies that such desires cannot exist without the assent of the deceived understanding and the consent of the will. Such desires, too, are forbidden by the precept, "Thou shalt not covet," lust or long for. Rom. 7 : 7. And the effects produced by it show that it is sinful: such streams could not flow from a clean and wholesome fountain. Mat. 15 : 19.

If, then, we would not dishonor God nor destroy our own blessedness, let us always struggle to suppress every inordinate desire. Where the fortress is the weakest, the garrison should be the strongest. Prov. 4 : 23.

Sin, when full grown or completely developed, appears among the evangelized in acts of daring presumption; as in persevering unbelief, Mark 16 : 16, total apostasy from the faith, Heb. 10 : 26-31, and the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, Mat. 12 : 31, 32; and among the unevangelized, in those who take delight in all kinds of impiety and immorality. Rom. 1 : 32.

Death is the ruin of the incorrigible, the destruction of their well being, the opposite of eternal life. Rom. 6 : 23;

Mat. 10 : 28 ; Jas. 5 : 20. This everlasting misery, in their complete nature, begins at the second advent of Christ. Mat. 25 : 41, 46 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 7-9 ; and the degree of punishment will be proportioned to the nature of the offence. Mat. 11 : 20-24 ; Luke 12 : 47, 48 ; Rev. 20 : 12, 13.

This death, misery, or punishment is not annihilation, or the utter destruction of being, as some affirm : for none but God can effect that, and He has not so described it in His Word. On the contrary, it is described as perpetually accompanied with anguish and torment. Luke 16 : 23, 28 ; Rev. 14 : 10, 11 ; 20 : 10 ; Mat. 13 : 49, 50 ; Luke 13 : 27, 28. But those who do not exist—how can they feel sorrow, or rage, with vexation, disappointment, and remorse ?

The final state of the unholy will be like that of the fallen angels, which consists especially in despair and remorse, and a fearful expectation of continued punishment. Mat. 25 : 41 ; Heb. 10 : 27 ; Mat. 8 : 29 ; Mark 9 : 44. But this death is still at work within them ; they are not annihilated.

There are degrees in the final punishment of the impenitent ; but annihilation, or the utter loss of being, admits of no degrees.

13. *From God*, through influences or appointments proceeding from Him, as the indirect or remote agent. (Winer.) So in v. 27, *from the world*, by influences proceeding from worldly men : and 5 : 4, *from you*, means arising from your decision and orders, although executed by subordinate agents. And 1 Cor. 1 : 30, *Who from God* is made, etc., *i.e.*, from His appointment. *hoti* recitative ; indicated above by quotation marks

A B C K L, etc., *Thph*, *Oec*, have *apo theou* : *S hupo theou*, but it is singular in that reading. *Untemptable* is the nearest equivalent to *apeirastos* : verbals in *tos* sometimes correspond to the termination *bilis* in Latin, as in Col. 1 : 16, and here. If it be rendered *untempted*, the meaning is weakened, but not essentially changed. But “untried,” or “unversed in,” as some explain, is exceedingly forced and inappropriate. *And* he himself, etc., *de* transitive=and, or moreover, as in ver. 9. At least, its adversative force can only be brought out by a paraphrase : Satan and men tempt, *but* God himself tempts none. With this verse compare Jer. 7 : 8-10.

14. *When drawn out and enticed by his own lust* : Lust, or unlawful

desire, like a harlot, draws one out of the right path, and that by beguiling (2 Pet. 2 : 14, Gr.) the understanding, or deceiving it with a seeming good. Others suppose the allusion is to the taking of fishes with a baited hook ; but if so, the word " enticed," or taken with a bait, would have preceded " drawn out."

15. *Then, i.e.*, next or after that ; the series or order being denoted, as in Jno. 13 : 5, and elsewhere. *Apokuei*, is pregnant with and thrusts forth : in the aorist, to beget, verse 18. Not found elsewhere in N. T.

17. Lit. *The Father of the lights*. Sept. Ps. 135 : 7, with vs. 8, 9 : cf. 148 : 3. The interpretation above given is recommended by its simplicity, and the consent of the most recent expositors ; also by the conflicting and unnatural exegesis of eminent men, *e.g.*, Author of saving knowledge, Beza ; of all excellence and good order, Calvin ; of knowledge, holiness, and bliss, Dickson ; of reason and joy, Doddridge ; of reason and revelation, Benson ; of spiritual gifts, or of spiritual lights in the kingdom of grace and glory, Bengel ; Creator of angelic powers or illuminated men, as a Greek scholiast has it ; Father of all inspired men, author of all the revelations spoken or written by them, Lange. These interpretations are either inconsistent with the preceding clause, or tautological, and they all originated (the three last named excepted, which are substantially the same) from taking *lights* metaphorically, instead of metonymically.

¹⁸ Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

True religion begins with a new life in the soul. This spiritual begetting is described by its causes, impulsive, efficient, instrumental, and final.

Its nature and efficient cause : It is the imparting of spiritual life, or a holy disposition, from God. *He begat* us ; it takes place once for all, which is intimated by the aorist or past tense ; He, the Father of lights and Author of all good, *begat* us : like such a Father he gave us life, or made us partakers of His holiness. Heb. 12 : 10 (See on 2 Pet. 1 : 4). So the metaphor is best explained. *Us* and *we*, *i.e.*, Israelites of the twelve dispersed tribes. Compare 1 Jno. 5 : 1 ; Jno. 1 : 12, 13, Gr. Peter describes the giving of this holy life as a rebegetting, or regeneration ; alluding to and contrasting it with ordinary generation, 1 Ep. 1 : 3, 23 ; Our Redeemer, as " a begetting from above," origi-

nating from the Father of lights, Jno. 3 : 3, and as "that which is begotten of the Spirit," ver. 6. Before this spiritual begetting, we are dead as to holiness ; strangers to the life of God, or the life which comes from God, and makes us like Him in moral perfections. Eph. 4 : 18.

God, instead of being the author of our sins, is the author of all the holiness that has ever been, is now, or shall be, in the hearts of men : of *that* He is indeed the producer, or efficient cause. When He begets a child, it is like Himself.

Sometimes, as here, regeneration is attributed to the Father. 1 Pet. 1 : 3 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 29. Sometimes, to Christ Jesus our Lord, the incarnate Son. Acts 2 : 33 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 15 : cf. Jno. 10 : 16. Also, to the Spirit, Jno. 3 : 6, 8, whose special office it is to renew and sanctify, and hence He is called the *Holy Spirit*. The Father, in consequence of Christ's work as our Redeemer, and *by the direct efficiency of the Spirit*, begets us ; and for this reason the influence or operation of the Spirit in regeneration and subsequent sanctification is designated as "the seed of God," and "incorruptible seed." 1 Jno. 3 : 9 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 23.

Its impulsive cause, or motive : *Of his own will, or because He willed it*. The motive is to be sought for *in God*, not outside of Him ; the kind and gracious purpose of the Father, the free and loving decision of His own will, so that James and Paul perfectly agree. 2 Tim. 1 : 9 ; Eph. 1 : 5. And by this expression all regard to human merit, all foresight of faith, holiness, and final perseverance, as the prerequisite condition, cause, or motive in God of men's regeneration, are wholly excluded. These virtues are effects of regeneration ; not the motive or reason why He begat us : that is, *because He willed it*. Tit. 3 : 5 ; Eph. 2 : 8-10.

This should not seem strange to any ; for God's will is that only which induces Him to act on matter or mind in the universe which he hath made : "who worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will." Eph. 1 : 11. Besides, the will of "the only wise God" is not caprice, but most intimately connected with all his perfections ; the will

of Him who cannot mistake, who cannot lie or deceive, who is not temptable in respect of evil things, and who has all possible perfection. (See on I Pet. I : 2.)

The instrumental cause, or means of producing it : *by the word of truth, i.e.*, Holy Scripture, or the Gospel, which alone makes known the truth as to the way of salvation ; as in Eph. I : 13 ; I Cor. 4 : 15 : cf. I Pet. I : 23 ; by that word as *ingrafted* in the soul : ver. 21.

Men may preach, or otherwise teach, the word of truth ; plant and water, but God maketh it grow, I Cor. 3 : 5-7 ; they are but His servants, or workmen in His vineyard. They may open the eyes of the blind, but like clay in the hands of Christ. Acts 26 : 18 ; Jno. 9 : 15. They may throw light on the narrow way, guide God's children therein, and urge them forward even in dark and stormy times, but only because Christ holds them as stars in His right hand. Rev. I : 16-20 ; 2 : 1.

The final cause, or the great end of their regeneration : *that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures. First fruits*, by a metaphor ; like such an oblation. *A kind of*, in Eng. Vers., is used to correct the supposed boldness of the metaphor, or to indicate that they are in some degree like the first fruits : a sort of first fruits, or somewhat like them. (So Winer, § 25.) But James, in our judgment, does not thus whittle away the general meaning of the noun, but uses the indefinite pronoun for a reason stated and illustrated below. More literally : *in order to our being in some respects (or relations) the first fruits of His creatures. Creatures*, by synecdoche, for intelligent creatures : cf. Mark 16 : 15.

The first fruits were wholly consecrated to the service of God, or holy, Jer. 2 : 3 ; Rev. 14 : 4, and that in token of dependence and gratitude. Deut. 26. They were the best of their kind, and the first that arrived at maturity, as well as a pledge of the ingathering and perfection of the rest.

And Israelites of the dispersion at the beginning of the Christian dispensation were *the first* that were begotten by

God in the freeness of His grace, Acts ii.; and as such *the best* of men then living, producing the ripest fruits of holiness ; and their regeneration was a *pledge* of the great harvest to be reaped under Christ's personal reign on earth, when the race is to be wholly consecrated to the service of God and the Lamb. Rev. 21 : 24-27 ; Dan. 7 : 13, 14, 27 ; and thus they are the first fruits of His creatures.

In some respects, or in relation to the dignity and usefulness of their office as apostles, prophets, and evangelists, the renewed from among the Israelites have been more distinguished and honored by God than other men, and to this James modestly alludes. These, before the close of the first century, preached by inspiration the Gospel revealed to them in the greater part of the civilized world ; at least in cities and the more populous regions : and so they became the persons employed by God to institute the Christian Church, and gather multitudes of the saved into it. Acts 2 : 41, 47, Gr. ; Luke 24 : 47-49 ; Col. 1 : 6, 23 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 12.

God also honored them more than other men by enabling them to write with infallible accuracy the truths revealed to them, and this inspired revelation we have in the Scriptures of the New Covenant, the Gospel of our salvation. 2 Pet. 3 : 15 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 6-13 ; 14 : 37 ; 1 Jno. 4 : 6. (See notes on 2 Pet. 1 : 3, 4.) (Similar things may be said of the prophets of preceding dispensations, and of the Scriptures of the Old Covenant which contain what God revealed to them.) What an unspeakable honor to be the organs of the Holy One in receiving and infallibly communicating the Word of Truth, that word by which God Himself begets children in His own image and likeness !

Of his own will, lit. *having willed it*=because He willed it : here of the internal cause or motive. So Beza, Alford, and others. Participles are often used to denote the circumstances of an action, such as time, cause, manner, and condition. Instead of God's will, or the good pleasure of his will, Eph. 1 : 5, equivalent expressions are found : as His abundant mercy, 1 Pet. 1 : 3, with Tit. 3 : 5. His own purpose and grace=His kind and gracious purpose, 2 Tim. 1 : 9, and the like.

He begat, apekuësen (see on ver. 15). Bengel (v. 17). *Deus patris et matris loco est.* Cf. Gal. 4 : 19. Dutch N. T., *Heeft hy ons gebaard.* *A kind of ; tina*, *some* or *any*, according to Eng. Vers., is the same as *somewhat like, a sort of*, which, however, is a rare use of this indefinite pronoun. So rendered, it is the acc. sing. fem. agreeing with *aparchèn*. We prefer taking it as acc. plur. neut. = in some respects or relations. So taken it does not lessen the meaning of the noun or its general signification, but modestly suggests something which the sacred writer cares not particularly to name : perhaps, as above indicated. If any can prove that this mode of explanation is untenable, then we ask, Why may not *tina* be here used like our indefinite article ? That we should be *a first fruit of his creatures* ; a handful indeed, but a pledge of the great incoming harvest. Bengel : *quædam*, habet modestiam : nam *primitiæ* proprie et absolute unus est Christus. (1 Cor. 15 : 20, 23.) "Salute my beloved Epænetus, who is *a first fruit of Asia unto Christ*," the first believer there, and a pledge of many who are to be offered to, or consecrate themselves to Christ. Rom. 16 : 5. Bretschneider thus : *principium ullum, licet parvum*, p. 517. *Tina*, not found in syr cop ; or perhaps not translated owing to the difficulty of understanding it. Vg ut *simus initium* (elsewhere *primitiæ*) *aliquod creaturæ ejus*. A B S also have *tina*.

¹⁹ Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath ; ²⁰ for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Duties of the regenerated : *Wherefore*, since we are thus begotten, ver. 18, *let every man*, who supposes or professes that he is renewed, *be swift to hear* the word of truth : *swift to hear* ; by a metaphor ; eager to learn.

This rapid motion of the heart, this docility or eagerness to learn as fully as possible what God has revealed in His Word, presupposes a holy curiosity ; and these naturally tend to attention, or the concentration of the intellect on the truths revealed : ver. 25.

Daily attention to revealed truth, combined with docility and curiosity, is necessary to become mighty in the Scriptures, or truly learned in the science of salvation.

No Christian should suppose that he can learn nothing from others, but while testing whatever he hears by the infallible standard of truth and duty, he should listen with

candor—and not constitute himself a pope on earth ; which is the pith of what our Saviour says. Mat. 23 : 7–10.

Slow to speak : Be calm and deliberate in the investigation of the word of truth before you declare your views of it to others.

This pungently reproves the folly of those who think that they are competent to be teachers of Christianity, when but babes in Christ, or but recently converted. 1 Tim. 3 : 6. The apostles learned theology, not in a log-college or splendid university, but in country and city, and by the lake of Galilee, as they followed the Great Teacher, and this for full three years at least. And after that they were endued with the Spirit, to qualify them still more for their office. What emphasis do these facts give to these injunctions of His inspired servant !

Rash and ignorant zealots are swift to speak of that which they were slow to learn ; they make up in volubility what they lack in knowledge and discretion. “ But if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” Mat. 15 : 14. (Which applies to Pharisaic formalists and teachers of traditional theology, as well as to the unlearned, commonly so called.)

Slow to wrath : Not soon angry with opponents, because of their real or supposed obtuseness in receiving what you shall speak or teach from the word of God ; even after careful study and deliberation on your part : Be gentle and patient. The motive enforcing this precept : *for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God* ; for such false zeal or angry defence of what you hold to be divine truth, is no proper way of vindicating Him as the author or revealer of it : man’s wrath doth not effect or practically prove that God is righteous, *i.e.*, true and faithful in that matter. More literally : *for man’s wrath doth not work out* (effect or accomplish, as in ver. 3) *God’s righteousness*, *i.e.*, a justification or vindication of His truthfulness. Rom. 3 : 4. A false and malignant zeal, although cloaked with

the name pious or religious, has no tendency to bring about that result. Compare Jas. 3 : 14-16, Gr.

Some explain "the righteousness of God" as equivalent to His justice ; as in Rom. 3 : 25, 26. This wrath is not the proper executive minister of His justice : a principle on which many persecutors have either consciously or ignorantly acted. Comp 4 : 2. We see no good reason to prevent us from combining this with the former interpretation, since both veracity and justice are included in God's perfect rectitude.

Others thus : For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness or piety which God requires. But it must indeed be a darkened conscience which does not instantly see and acknowledge that.

We may, even in accurate expressions and by weighty arguments, justify God, or declare Him to be right with respect to any truth revealed in His Word ; but if it be done with the unequivocal signs of an enraged spirit, will He be pleased with such a vindicator ? And whom will it benefit ? The Word of Truth cannot be driven into any mind by polemical invectives, or be clinched by the blows of an angry workman.

They who act as if this might be accomplished in such a spirit do not seem to recollect whose servants they profess to be. Can the truthfulness or justice of God be proved by using tools shaped and sharpened in the devil's workshop ? Is that the way to reach and pierce the human conscience ?

How promotive of the glory of God, and how pleasant and instructive to men, would controversy among Christians be as to disputed points of the Word of Truth, if these precepts of Christ's servant were universally obeyed !

They who cannot or will not distinguish between an earnest defence of the Gospel, and an angry and malignant defence of it for private or party ends, may be pitied, but need not be reasoned with, 5 : 19, 20 ; Phil. 1 : 15-17 ; 3 : 2, 18, 19 ; Jude vs. 3, 4.

19. K L Thph Oec have *ωστε, so then*, or wherefore : A B C vg cop *ωστε* and *de* after *εστω*. "Ye know" it, "but let every man," etc., differs not in sense from "So then, let every man," etc. Tischendorf prefers the former reading.

²¹ Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Having spoken of the manner in which we must study and handle the Word so as to be truly profitable to others, vs. 19, 20, James now shows how we should receive it in order to promote our own sanctification. *Wherefore, i.e.*, since a wrathful defence of any scriptural truth is no proper way of vindicating God as the author or revealer of it, *putting away all filthiness and overflowing* (the scum) *of malice, in meekness receive*, etc. Compare 1. Pet. 2 : 1-3.

The most cordial reception of the Word is the great duty enjoined. Or, use that for sanctification which was the instrument of your regeneration. *Receive* it with the hands of faith and love. Receive the *ingrafted* word, the word that was put into your souls, like a graft into a tree, at your regeneration. (So we understand the metaphors.) In regeneration the word of truth is like a shoot ingrafted in a tree ; a new and holy life being thus put within us by God, and the choice fruits thence resulting afterwards appear in holy words and actions. This word is once for all ingrafted by the direct efficiency of the Spirit, and when constantly received by faith and love it is *able to save the soul*, or it is a powerful instrument in promoting our growth in holiness ; saving or delivering us from the dominion of sin. Rom. 1 : 16 ; Col. 1 : 6. The manner of receiving it : *in meekness*, in a spirit of meekness ; the opposite of "wrath" in the preceding verse and of "malice" in this. Meekness is not humility, or a low estimate of ourselves, but a mild, forbearing spirit ; a calm, gentle, and forgiving disposition. While listening to God, speaking in His Word, abide in this disposition towards men.

Also, *by putting away all filthiness and the scum (overflowing) of malice*: used by substitution for voluntarily renouncing all known sin, and malice in particular. The allusion is to the filthiness of the body, as in 1. Pet. 3 : 21. Filth is put away by washing or cleansing. Everything which the eye of conscience, enlightened by the Word, detects as filthy, or morally wrong, disadvantageous and degrading. All this the regenerated must abhor and remove. Compare 2 Cor. 7 : 1, with 6 : 18. In Rom. 5 : 17, 2 Cor. 8 : 2, *perisseia* is rendered *abundance*: there it would be as well to say *overflowing of grace*, and *overflowing of joy*. Here it is the overflowing or scum of malice. When malice is boiling in the heart, its ugly froth is apt to come to the mouth, and overflow in many disparaging expressions. And if so, what good can the reading, hearing, or preaching of God's word do us?

Motives : We can honor God only by receiving it as above described : implied in "wherefore."

So we will promote our growth in grace, our present and eternal well-being. Gratitude should urge us to it, since God has already given us a holy life thereby.

Perisseia kakias, overflowing proceeding from malice : pr. badness ; hence of physical evil, Mat. 6 : 34 ; of moral evil, especially in malignant forms, Acts 8 : 22 ; and of malice, as here, and in 1 Pet. 2 : 1 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 8. The translation, "abundance of wickedness," or "excess of wickedness," is objectionable, as it tends to lead the reader to suppose that a little of it would not be amiss. *Emphutos* (here only in N. T.) = *ingrafted*, or *implanted*: see *phuo*, Luke 8 : 6, 8, and Heb. 12 : 15. We prefer the former ; though the latter signification leaves the sense unchanged : the word planted at regeneration in your souls, like seed in good soil. Luke 8 : 8 ; Mat. 13 : 23. In 1 Pet. 2 : 1, "*putting away all malice*," there is a metaphor, and the allusion is to soiled, torn, or infected garments ; but *putting away all filthiness* is a substitution, with the allusion above stated. The participle here is indicative of manner.

²² But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. ²³ For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his

natural face in a glass : ²⁴ for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. ²⁵ But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, the same shall be blessed in his deed. (marg. doing.)

Obey as well as hear the Word. *Doers of the word, and not hearers only* : a plain allusion to the expressions of our Lord, Mat. 7 : 24. They are doers of the Word who habitually obey its precepts ; in whose heart it has been ingrafted, is bearing fruit, and ripening, or increasing, in holiness. Col. 1 : 6.

The Word is not only a revelation of God's grace in Christ, and " the Word of life," but also the infallible rule of duty : it must not only be believed, but also obeyed.

Some neither hear, read, nor obey the Sacred Word, but keep themselves altogether aloof from its influence. That such are in an unrenewed state, is indisputable.

Others hear only ; receiving the Word as a pleasant speculation, requiring no practical attention on their part, and so receiving it in vain. 2 Cor. 6 : 1. These are sapless sticks, in appearance only adhering to the vine. Jno. 15 : 1, 2. Such cannot deceive God, but they may and do *deceive themselves* ; and that by listening with a sort of romantic pleasure to the Gospel, or by extolling in words God's love in Christ, falsely concluding that such hearing without obedience is sufficient for the attainment of salvation. Such a hearer *is like a man beholding his natural face in a mirror ; for he beheld himself, and hath gone away, and straightway forgot what manner of man he was.* James continues the simile in the form of a narrative, or describes the man before the mirror as if he had been a spectator of his actions : he beheld his face, a momentary image of himself ; *has gone away*, has directed his attention elsewhere ; and immediately forgot how he looked in the mirror.

Obedience to the Word should ever be combined with the hearing of it : *for otherwise we deceive ourselves*, or reason

falsely concerning our present state and future destiny. *By mere hearing we can receive no permanent benefit.* Transient impressions and momentary convictions of duty may flit through the mind, as images seen in a mirror, but as it is not pleasant to such to discern even for a second the ugliness of their hearts, they go away from the Divine Word, or direct and fasten their attention on other things. Hence these momentary convictions soon vanish from the conscience and memory; leaving them without an accurate knowledge of themselves, and even without an honest desire to obtain that knowledge.

It is only by a proper obedience that one can become truly blessed; as James shows in the following verse :

But he who looketh into the perfect law of freedom and abideth thereby, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of work; the same shall be blessed in the doing of it.

The perfect law of freedom: it is the same as *the word of truth*, and *the word ingrafted* at regeneration, vs. 18, 21, and *the word*, vs. 22, 23 (cf. 2 : 12). The Gospel of our salvation, Eph. 1 : 13, considered not only or merely as a revelation of God's grace, but also of man's duty.

The whole Scripture, the glad tidings of salvation which it exhibits not excluded, may be justly called *a law*, Rom. 3 : 27, since it comes to us as an inspired volume, and from the highest possible authority, that of God. Accordingly, the obligation to believe the facts, doctrines, promises, threatenings, and predictions, as well as to obey the precepts it contains, rests on one and the same foundation. The Gospel is *a perfect law*, when compared with or opposed to the Mosaic institutes, which were designed for and adapted to the Church in its infancy or minority. Gal. 4 : 1-3; Heb. 7 : 19. Also, when compared with or opposed to any merely human teaching in theology.—Col. 2 : 8; 1 Cor. 2 : 6-13.

It is the perfect law of freedom: genitive of the characteristic quality; a perfect law, the inseparable property of which is freedom: not despotic or arbitrary, but free, since

it comes from the Holiest Free Agent in the universe (2 : 12). Hence, impartial and just, as well as kind and gracious.

The Scripture, and especially the Gospel contained in it, is the perfect law of freedom, because by it we are clearly taught how as sinful men we may be set free from our miserable estate, and that to the glory of God :

1. True believers are delivered from the yoke of bondage ; the ceremonial law with its burdensome statutes. Acts 15 : 1, 5, 10, 24 ; Gal. 5 : 1.

2. They are also set free from the condemning power of the moral law ; freed from its curse : and that because of Christ's perfect obedience unto death in their stead and for their benefit. Col. 2 : 13, 14 ; Gal. 3 : 10, 13 ; Jas. 2 : 23. In a word, the law, *not as the infallible and immutable rule of duty, but as the rule or method of justification*, is abolished to an unfeigned believer in Christ.

3. It is the perfect law of freedom, since it is the instrument used by God to deliver believers from the dominion or reigning power of indwelling sin : and to *this* James especially refers, 1 : 21 ; cf. Rom. 6 : 14, etc., 7 : 1-6. Being ingrafted at regeneration, it sends its sap or vital influence into every branch or faculty of the renewed mind, and hence it is able to save our souls, the Spirit causing it to be the word of life, or the word by which holiness is first given and then invigorated : vs. 18, 21, with Phil. 2 : 16.

Indeed the main design and invariable effect of Christ's redeeming us from the curse of the law is " that we may receive the promise of the Spirit through faith ; " so that a true believer is at the same time both justified and sanctified ; delivered at once from the guilt and dominion of sin, Gal. 3 : 13, 14 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 24, the great distinction being that justification is an instantaneous judicial act of the Father, and sanctification a progressive work of the Spirit. Rom. 8 : 33 ; Phil. 1 : 6 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 16.

But how can a believer know that he is in the way of obtaining this blessedness ; or, how must he act that the word

may become the perfect law of freedom to him? James portrays it thus : He who *looketh into* the perfect law, that of freedom, and *abideth thereby* ; metaphors denoting the most fixed and earnest attention, and perseverance therein, or the persevering concentration of the mental powers in the study of this perfect law : *he being not a forgetful hearer*, not hearing to forget or disregard what is holy, just, and good, *but a doer of work*, of work prescribed by this law and to him, habitually discharging the duties of his place and station ; *the same shall be blessed in the doing of it* ; while thus obeying God, peace of conscience and the joy of hope will render him emphatically blessed ; blessed every day and in performing the duty incumbent on him.

Thus we see that the Gospel becomes the perfect law of freedom to us only by intense and persevering study of it, and this united with an habitual discharge of the duties of our calling, place, or station in life.

22. *Deceiving yourselves* : cf. Col. 2 : 4, Gr. 23. *If any one is*, etc., *ei* with the indicative takes the fact for granted ; either as truly so, or for the sake of argument. *Face of his birth*, the gen. of the adjunct like a descriptive adjective in English=his natural face ; as *hearer of forgetfulness* is=forgetful hearer, 25 v. *Mirrors* in common use were of polished metal, Ex. 38 : 8 ; Job 37 : 18. 25. *He who looketh into* : it is a pregnant phrase in the original=*he that stoops alongside of* and looks into, as in 1 Pet. 1 : 12, Jno. 20 : 11, with Jno. 20 : 5. *Autou* is neuter, and refers to *ergou* preceding it.

²⁶ If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

²⁷ Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

The manifestations, effects, or characteristics of true and false religion : or, how the one is in this manner clearly distinguished from the other. This general truth underlies, more or less, all the exhortations that follow to the end of the epistle.

If any one seem to be religious, if he appears so to others ; or rather, *If any one supposes that he is religious*, fancies that he is a worshipper of God and has a zeal for His glory. Comp. Rom. 10 : 2 ; Acts 22 : 3. *Not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his own heart, this one's religion is vain* : if he fancies that he is religious, while he is conscious of having no government of himself as to the words he utters, perfectly worthless is the religion of this self-deceiver. Heart, by synecdoche, for himself. To bridle the tongue is a substitution for the control, restraint, or right guidance of one's daily talk. Comp. Isa. 37 : 29.

They who do not care what they say about God, Christ, or men, and yet imagine that they are religious or pious, because they observe all the external forms of divine worship—vain is the religion of such self-conceited pharisaic ritualists, such self-deceived religionists. There is no true religion in him who bridleth not his tongue.

Religion, as James views it, is the outward indication or manifestation of a religious disposition. It begins at regeneration by the ingrafted word, which is able to save the soul from the dominion of sin, that word being the perfect law of freedom to a truly renewed or religious man : vs. 18, 21, 25. (We have a development of this verse in 3 : 1-12.)

Pure religion and undefiled, etc. This is not a description of the whole of religion, but of some of its essential constituents, or modes of manifesting it : and this in opposition to those who act as if the external homage of God was sufficient of itself. The sense is : In the judgment of God, who is also the Father of the renewed, no worship of Him is sincere, unless it is connected with and shown by charity to the needy, and non-conformity to the world.

Clean and undefiled are metaphors, used to describe the manifestation of a religious disposition that is truly and emphatically holy. *To visit*, i.e., for the purpose of giving relief and aid, as in Mat. 25 : 36, 43, not for hypocritical, unprofitable talk, Jas. 2 : 15, 16. *Orphans and widows* are mentioned as examples of those in affliction ; they being

often wronged and oppressed, instead of cheered and supported in their wants and sorrows : which is a sin eminently displeasing to God. Deut. 27 : 19 ; Ex. 22 : 21-24.

To keep himself unspotted from the world : by substitution for a conscientious shunning of all the sins which they are wont to commit : keeping aloof from the filth proceeding from worldly men. Comp. 2 Pet. 2 : 20. *World* by metonymy for its inhabitants, men of the world, the ungodly.

This abstinence from the polluting sins of the world, this care of not having our garments defiled by filth proceeding from them, this shunning of fashionable and prevailing sins, is an indubitable characteristic of a child of God, or a truly religious man, “and it is a folly to think that because the power is from God, therefore the care should not be in ourselves.”

A B C S vg omit *among you* ; L K Thph Oec have it. *Religion : thrēskeia*, a worshipping, Col. 2 : 18 ; mode of worship, Acts 26 : 5. (In composition, Col. 2 : 23.) But here by metonymy for the effect : To visit orphans and widows in their affliction, to keep oneself unspotted from the world, this is an effect or manifestation of a truly religious disposition, and so our God and Father judges of it. *Before God*, in his judgment ; He sitting by as judge in the matter : as in 1 Pet. 2 : 4, 20 ; Rom. 2 : 13 ; *para to theo* so A B, but K L S *para theo*. This one’s religion is vain=his religious disposition is shown to be false, misdirected, or perfectly worthless, because he does not habitually bridle his tongue. Vain is the opposite of clean and undefiled.

CHAPTER II.

Synopsis of Contents :

I. True religion cannot exist in connection with respect of persons, 1-13.

1. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One, is wholly inconsistent with respect of persons.

2. The proposition illustrated, with an appeal to the conscience as to the inexcusableness of the sin.

3. They who despise the poor are not like God, who selects and honors them as the objects of His mercy.

4. It is folly to be partial to the rich, since they are your oppressors and persecutors, as well as revilers of Christ and of Christians.

5. Respect of persons is a gross violation of the royal law of love, which is to be obeyed in its unity or totality.

6. The partial and cruel must look for a severe judgment hereafter.

II. True religion consists in faith in Christ, but this faith cannot exist without manifesting itself by its characteristic works, 14-26. The proposition stated : A mere profession of faith in Christ without obedience to Him, is not saving faith.

1. The proposition illustrated, or the deadness of such a faith exhibited.

2. Faith, if it exists in the heart at all, must show itself, not by mere words, but by deeds.

3. Faith, without love and obedience, the demons have.

4. The justification of Abraham and Rahab was shown or proved by holy obedience ; or, their faith was demonstrated to be living by its operative power.

My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons.

True religion consists in faith in Christ ; but this faith cannot exist in connection with respect of persons.

Our translators seem to understand the Greek thus : Do not hold or profess *the Christian religion*, with respect of persons. But it is very doubtful whether the words "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ" mean *that* ; because James in this chapter, and elsewhere, is not speaking of faith objectively considered, or the truths believed, but subjectively, or as it exists or is professed to exist in the mind : see 1 : 3, 6 ; 2 : 5 ; 5 : 15, with 2 : 14, etc. Besides, "*the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ*," and the like expressions, are elsewhere used to denote Christ as the object of faith : in such cases our idiom requires *in*, not *of* : as in Rom. 3 : 22. By faith of Jesus Christ=by faith in Him, 3 : 26. Faith of Jesus=faith in Jesus. See also Gal. 2 : 16, 20 ; 3 : 22 ; Eph. 3 : 12 ; Phil. 3 : 9. "Have faith of God," *i.e.*, have faith in God. Mark 11 : 22.

We understand the original thus : *My brethren, have ye, with respect of persons, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One?* Can these two things, perfectly incompatible, exist in the same heart? *Have ye* faith in Him? Can ye think it belongs to you? vs. 14, 18. Our Lord Jesus Christ, *the glory* : genitive of apposition or further description, in which there is a metonymy of the abstract for the concrete term = the glorious one. So Luke 2 : 32. "*The glory* of thy people Israel," *i.e.*, the glorious one, the God-man. Isa. 9 : 6 ; Rom. 9 : 5 (Compare Acts 7 : 2 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 14) ; 1 Jno. 1 : 1. "Concerning the Word, *the Life* ;" which is a further description of the Word = the living One. Paul says, The Lord of glory, 1 Cor. 2 : 8 ; but James the Glory, or the Glorious One ; so that there is no need of supplying anything, or making both describe the Saviour in the same words.

With respect of persons : lit. *in* respect of persons, *i.e.*, in connection with ; or, moving in the element of partialities.

The noun in the Greek is of the plural number, and thus the many manifestations of this sin are hinted at and re-proved, although in what follows there is an illustration of but one of its forms. It means *partiality*; regard or contempt shown to men on account of their external condition and circumstances, and for that reason only. Literally it is *a taking hold of the face*, or accepting the outward appearance as a proof of excellence; as a child stares at the gay trappings of a worthless horse, and as children of a larger growth admire others because of their painted houses, large farms, rich clothing, silver or gold. The word primarily refers to judges; as in Lev. 19 : 15; Deut. 10 : 17; Prov. 18 : 5; 1 Pet. 1 : 17. (Jude ver. 16, Gr., admiring faces.) But the same or a similar injustice is a sin in any. Jas. 2 : 4, 9.

Honor is due to men as magistrates, Rom. 13 : 7, as Christians, Rom. 12 : 10, and as men, 1 Pet. 2 : 17. But they who fawn upon or scorn the rich merely as rich, and they who flatter or despise the poor simply as poor, are respecters of persons.

“ He’s but a wretch with all his lands,
That has a narrow soul.”

And he who longs for such things and pines away with envy because he has them not, is no better.

Respect of persons is peculiarly sinful among those who call themselves Christians: because they profess to be brethren; but this partiality proves that their faith in Christ is not genuine; and it is wholly contrary to the example set before them by the Glorious One.

We have no reason to think that the doctrine of James concerning Christ differs from that of Isaiah, John, Paul, or any other sacred writer. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Glorious One: glorious in Himself; for He is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the stamp of His essence. Heb. 1 : 3. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead

bodily. Col. 2 : 9. Compare Isa. 9 : 6, and I. Jno. 1 : 1, 2 ; 5 : 20 ; Jno. 1 : 1-5, 14 ; 20 : 31.

Glorious is He also as the object of adoration and love to the holy universe. Rev. 5 : 11-13. And as the Lord of the Church, or the redeemed and sanctified both on earth and in heaven, He is the Glorious One, the peculiar object of their adoration, gratitude, and obedience. Eph. 1 : 22 ; Rev. 5 : 9, 10.

He is the Glorious One also as the God-man Messiah, the predicted King of Israel, and the Lord of the whole renovated earth. Isa. 9 : 6-7 ; Ps. 2 ; Jno. 1 : 50 ; Rev. 5 : 9-10 ; Comp. Jas. 1 : 12 ; 2 : 5 ; Rom. 8 : 17-23.

To dishonor, by a little contemptible partiality, Him who is so glorious in Himself and as our Saviour, is a sin indeed. Phil. 2 : 5-11.

The exact meaning of James becomes more evident by expressing it thus : Have ye faith in our Jehovah (or, Adonai), Jesus the Messiah ? So the dispersed Israelites would naturally and instantly take it. (Compare 1 Pet. 2 : 3, 4, with Ps. 34 : 8, and 1 Pet. 3 : 15. "But hallow *the Christ* as *Lord* in your hearts ;" according to the reading now generally received and confirmed by A B C S vg cop syr.)

We take *mē* as an interrogative particle, as in 2 : 14, 3 : 12, and *echete* as indic. pres. ; which agrees well with the animated style of James. If *mē* be taken as the subjective negative, then the translation should be : Ye have not faith in, etc. *The glory* ; the interpretation above given is confirmed by its simplicity and naturalness, as well as by the conflicting opinions of others, as (1) (The Lord) of glory, which addition is needless ; and so the genitive is too far removed from the noun it is supposed to modify : besides, *hēmōn* modifies the meaning of *kurīou*. (2) The Syriac translator connects "the glory" with "faith," making it mean the glorious faith ; but the position of "glory" in the sentence forbids that forced mode of explanation. (3) Lange connects it with *Christou* alone ; but then the article would be before *Christou*.

² For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment ; ³ and ye have respect to him that weareth

the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place ; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool : ' are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts ?

This paragraph is a lively sketch or word-painting : the events are assumed as objectively possible, but not as actual facts, and they are used merely to illustrate his main position as stated in the preceding verse. A translation more in accordance with our idiom : If, for example, there should come into your synagogue a man with golden rings, in a shining garment, and there should come in also a poor man in a filthy garment ; and ye should look on the one wearing the shining garment, and should say to him, Sit thou here in a good place ; and to the poor should say, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool : would ye not then show partiality among yourselves, and become judges from evil considerations ? or, from sinful motives.

A shining garment = gay clothing ; clean, bright, and showy, or a splendid dress : *filthy* is just the opposite. *Synagogue*, lit. assembly ; hence place of meeting, and those assembled for worship. *To look on*, or *up to*, is = treat with respect, favorably regard ; the eye beaming with surprise and pleasure.

The supposed case relates to two strangers, coming in among those assembled for worship. (1 Cor. 14 : 23-25.) By the supposition, one entered the synagogue in gay clothing, his lily hand sparkling with golden rings. Him they favorably regarded, and led to a seat more ornamental than the rest, and well adapted for a fop to lounge in. The other lingered at the door, and with his sordid dress gained no favor, but was forced to stand where he was, or sit awkwardly on a footstool. Thus the rich as rich was honored, and the poor as poor dishonored, without any knowledge of their character. This, says James, in substance, is an example or illustration of what I mean by " respect of persons ;" and did ye not then, or in the supposed case, instantly show partiality among yourselves, and become

judges of unknown persons from sinful motives? (Let conscience answer.)

To treat men with unfeigned politeness, with outward indications of inward good will, is at all times our duty. Let us think of "the gentleness of Christ," the Glorious One.

To honor the rich is no sin; honor being due to them as men, and as men in official stations, as many of them are; but to honor them so as to despise the poor, to show them marked tokens of respect in houses of worship merely on account of their wealth or rank, their moral character being ignored, this is no trifling offence, as an enlightened conscience testifies.

To build houses of worship for the rich and fashionable alone, or into which the poor are with great difficulty admitted, and not heartily welcomed; what is this but to show respect of persons, and that in houses professedly consecrated to God, the maker of all? Prov. 22 : 2. It may, indeed, be necessary to build houses of worship, or so-called mission chapels, in the streets and lanes where the vicious poor dwell, in order to lift them up from their physical and moral degradation; but no building consecrated to God can be defiled by the feet or dress of the poor.

The protasis is contained in 2d and 3d verses; the apodosis, in the fourth verse; and there the first *kai* (=then, in that case, as in 4 : 15) introduces the apodosis. *ean* with the subjunctive aorist (condition or supposition with assumption of objective possibility) is followed in the apodosis by the aorist indicative, to denote a transient act; as in 1 Cor. 7 : 28. The first aorist indicative is here used by James in a middle signification—to be separated from another by one's own act; which is to make distinctions, or to show partiality: cf. *adiakritos*, 3 : 17. 'Lit. judges of *evil thoughts*; which is not the genitive of the adjunct=evil thinking judges, as Beza and others suppose, but the genitive of source or origin, the internal cause of the outward actions: *judges* of strangers, and this judgment of them *arising from sinful thoughts*, or motives.

Other interpretations may be thus condensed: *Did ye not doubt in yourselves* (to wit, of the genuineness of your faith), *and become judges of evil thoughts?* namely, your own: which in sense does not differ from the one above stated, though it does not agree so well with the use of

adiakritos in 3 : 17. Some do not translate interrogatively ; but that is forced, and leaves the apodosis limping.

3. K L syr vg have *to him*, but not A B C S. 4. The first *kai* is not found in A C S vg cop syr, but in K L Thph Oec. With or without it, the sense is the same. B has neither *kai* nor *ou*. The variations probably originated from not perceiving that *kai* is the sign of the apodosis, as above explained. *For example, gar* explanatory or illustrative, serving merely to introduce a fuller description of his meaning.

Lange, owing to his peculiar views of the general scope of the epistle, calls these verses a parable ; but this is a mere hypothesis, and not proven, parables, strictly taken, being always described in the aorist indicative (historical or past tense), *never* by *if*, with the *aorist subjunctive* : e.g., the Parable of the Sower. We mention this chiefly to show the necessity of the most careful study of figurative language, and the confused views of eminent men concerning it.

⁶ Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love Him ? ⁶ But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats ? ⁷ Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called ?

Having shown how perfectly incompatible respect of persons is with faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One, and by a supposed case or illustration led their own conscience to condemn them, James now urges another powerful motive against it : If ye dishonor the poor, ye are not like God, who has selected them as the special objects of His mercy and favor. So the sacred writer goes from the sphere of supposition into that of reality, and appeals to their own knowledge and experience.

When God begets us with the word of truth, faith in the Glorious One forthwith follows, with a constantly increasing moral likeness to God and Christ ; but they who despise the poor have nothing of this likeness, and hence are without true religion.

Hath not God chosen, etc. James refers to a regeneration of men as a manifestation of God's eternal choice ; like Paul in 1 Cor. 1 : 26-29. So *God honors* them whom *ye*

dishonor. The choice is proved by deeds, making them *rich in faith*, etc., or as Peter expresses it, *manifested in sanctification of the Spirit.* 1 Ep. 1 : 2. And all this *because He willed it.* Jas. 1 : 18.

God has a most unquestionable right to select the objects of His mercy, Rom. 9 : 8, and He daily exercises that right, not only in His providence, but also by His Spirit in the regeneration and sanctification of men. And since He is infinitely wise and just, it is impossible for Him to make a wrong choice. (Compare what our Saviour says, Mat. 11 : 20-27.)

The persons chosen : *the poor of this world*, poor in worldly goods ; or rather, according to the best authenticated reading, *the poor according to the world, i.e.*, the poor, obscure and insignificant in the opinion of worldly men ; deemed the nobodies by those who fancy themselves the magnates of the earth. (1 Cor. 1 : 26-29.) The chosen of this and preceding dispensations, when compared with the great mass of the wicked, are few, Mat. 7 : 14, Luke 12 : 32 ; but in themselves considered they are many, Mat. 8 : 11 ; Rev. 7 : 9.

The design of the choice : *hath not God chosen the poor in the opinion of the world* to be *rich in faith*, etc., *i.e.*, that they should be *rich in faith* (faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One) : *to be* must be supplied, as in Rom. 8 : 29—"Whom he foreknew he also predestinated (to be) conformed to the image of his Son." *Rich* ; like the rich, but rich in faith, and abounding in it : He chose them that their wealth should consist in "precious faith." And indeed the pious poor often exhibit a faith that is remarkable for its childlike simplicity and freedom from doubting (1 : 6).

God chose them also to be *heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him* : see on 1 : 12. They who are chosen by God to inherit the kingdom are not to be subjects, but kings : the many brothers associated with the First Born, the coregents of the Great King. Rom. 8 : 29 ; Heb. 1 : 9 ; Rev. 5 : 9, 10 ; 20 : 4-6 ; 22 : 5.

It will throw light on many portions of Holy Scripture, if we have a clear and accurate idea of what may be called the various forms of the Divine kingdom.

I. There is *the kingdom of God essentially or absolutely considered; the invisible government of the invisible God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, over the universe; over all worlds with all creatures, according to their several natures.* This government of God belongs to Him as God, as Creator and Upholder of all things. It began at the creation, is now going on, and will never cease; and it is most holy, wise, just, and good. (1 Chron. 29 : 11; which is alluded to in the doxology of the Lord's Prayer. Ps. 103 : 19-22.)

This kingdom belongs to the Eternal Word or Son by original indefeasable right, in virtue of His divine nature, or His equality with the Father and the Spirit, the One only living and true God. It is not a delegated authority and government, but essentially Divine: "My Father worketh hitherto," *i.e.*, ever since the creation, "and I work." Jno. 5 : 17; 1 : 1-4; Col. 1 : 15-17. "Upholding all things by the word of his power." Heb. 1 : 3.

This kingdom is not the one destined for the rich in faith, nor is it promised to men that love God, nor to angels, or created intelligencies of the highest and holiest grade, inasmuch as it is peculiar to Jehovah as such, and He alone is competent to act as the King and Lord of the universe: all which is self-evident.

II. The kingdom of God *committed to and shared with the Theanthropos: i.e.*, the God-man, Jesus Christ. This is twofold:

1. *Our Lord's theanthropic kosmical kingdom;* or His acting as Coregent with God in the government of the kosmos or universe, and especially of the heavenly worlds. This is described by God causing Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly worlds, far above all principality and authority and power and dominion, and every name named not only in this age, but also in the one to come, and He sub-

jected all under His feet, and appointed Him head over all. Eph. 1 : 20, etc. And by our Saviour thus : All authority is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Mat. 28 : 18, Gr.

This kingdom or government *began* at the resurrection and ascension of our Lord : Mat. 28 and Eph. 1, just cited. It is *the reward* of His incarnation, and obedience unto death for our redemption. Phil. 2 : 5-9. The *great design* of it : He gave (appointed) Him Head over all *for the Church*, Eph. 1 : 22, for the present and everlasting well-being of the chosen, redeemed and sanctified. *Also*, that the intelligent holy universe might learn to know and acknowledge *Jesus Christ* to be *Jehovah*, or God incarnate, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2 : 10, 11. (And this is one great reason why our Lord remains so long in the heavenly worlds.) Compare Mark 12 : 29, with Deut. 6 : 4 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 3.

This government of the heavenly worlds is to be given up to God even the Father, after Christ has come again, after the second resurrection, or the judgment and condemnation of the unholy dead in their complete nature. *Then* all rebels against God and Christ will be wholly overthrown, and the incorrigible of men and angels for ever confined in the prison of the lost. 1 Cor. 15 : 24-26 ; Rev. 20 : 7-15.

This form of the Divine kingdom, this coregency of the Theanthropos over the heavenly worlds, was not revealed to the prophets of preceding dispensations, but only to the apostles and prophets of this dispensation, after the ascension of the Glorious One. (The 110th Ps. portrays Messiah the Priest-King sitting at God's right hand, not in heaven, but on earth ; and as conquering and triumphing over His implacable enemies here, not quelling a rebellion in heaven.)

The relation of this form of the kingdom to the Church, or the sanctified on earth. As the Coregent with God, Christ is the administrator of Providence in this world : see the letters to the seven churches in the Revelation. Sitting at God's right hand, He is the giver of the Spirit.—Acts

2 : 33. As such He trains and educates the chosen for their future dignity and glory by the efficiency of His Spirit, and amid various trials. 2 Thes. 1 : 4, 5 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 10, 11 ; Col. 1 : 13. This is an invisible reign, dominion or government by His Spirit.

2. Our Lord's *Messianic Kingdom* ; His kingdom as the Messiah on earth, the kingdom promised Him as the Christ of God, and portrayed by prophets and apostles.

He is to receive it by *appointment* of the Father, Ps. 2 : 72 : 110, and He is *qualified* for the discharge of its duties in His human nature by the Holy Spirit. Isa. 11.

The *realm* of Messiah the Prince is the future inhabited and renovated earth : besides the texts referred to, see Rom. 8 : 17-23 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 13 ; Dan. 7 : 13, 14, 27 ; Rev. 11 : 15 ; Heb. 2 : 5-8.

This kingdom *will begin* at the second coming of Christ, when the nations will be renewed, Dan. 7 : 13, 14, and all Israel be saved. Isa. 11 and 12 ; Ezek. 34 : 36 : and 37. Then all despots, civil and ecclesiastical, will be hurled from the earth, and the saints, risen and living in the flesh, will be rewarded. Rev. 11 : 18 ; 19 : 11-21. Satan also and his angels will be confined in the abyss, Rev. 20 : 1-3, and the Spirit be poured out upon all flesh. Ps. 72 : 6 ; Ezek. 36 : 25-27. The Parable of the Nobleman shows that it will be set up at Christ's return from heaven ; and that in the clearest and most unmistakable way. Luke 19 : 11-27.

A share in this kingdom, or government of mankind on earth under the Christ *is promised* to the chosen and sanctified, the risen and glorified saints. They are to be the coregents of Christ, Dan. 7 : 27 ; Rev. 5 : 9, 10 ; 20 : 4-6 ; 22 : 5, and are symbolized or represented by the New Jerusalem. Rev. 21.

Their *subjects* will be sanctified kings and nations, still living in the flesh or mortal body. Rev. 21 : 23-26. Means, however, will be provided for changing them from mortal to immortal, at such times and in such numbers as God and His Christ shall deem best ; which means are symbolized

by the leaves of the trees of life which are for the healing of the nations. Rev. 22 : 2. And to this Messianic kingdom James here refers. (We have briefly described love to God in the notes on 1 : 12.)

Another motive against respect of persons follows : *Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you to the judgment seats?* How foolish and wicked to prefer tyrants, who persecute you under the forms of law and justice, to those rich in faith, lovers of God, and heirs of the kingdom, so often predicted by prophets and apostles ! *Do not they blaspheme the beautiful name by which ye are called?* Are not they revilers of Christ and of Christians ? *Christ* means the Anointed One, the great prophet, priest, and king, appointed by God to restore all things in this sin-cursed world. —Acts 3 : 19-21. *Christians* partake of the anointing by the Spirit, and are chosen by God to share in the official dignity and glory of Christ. Both names are *beautiful*, because true and becoming.

Our Lord commands us to do good to them that hate us, and pray for those who despitefully use and persecute us, but He does not require us to approve of their conduct as revilers and persecutors.—Mat. 5 : 43-48.

Nicodemus came to Christ, with his mind full of the Messianic kingdom ; but our Lord taught him, and teaches us, that without regeneration and faith in Him no one can ever see or enter that kingdom.—Jno. 3. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven ;” and so of the persecuted for the sake of Christ and righteousness. This kingdom, says James, is destined for the rich in faith, and the lovers of God ; and for no others, whether Israelites or Gentiles.

5. *Of this world*, a few cursive manuscripts, Oec in the text, vg in *this world* : *of the world*, K L cop syr Oec in his commentary : *In the opinion of the world* (according to the world) *to kosmo*, A B C S, which we prefer : see notes on Jude, ver, 14. *Basileias*, B C syr vg ; *epaggeleias*, A S. The aorists in this context seem to be used in a Hebraistic way, or like our perfect tense.

⁸ If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well : ⁹ but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all. " For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

Respect of persons is a gross violation of the royal law of love, which is to be observed in its unity or totality. He, therefore, who habitually disobeys one precept cannot be religious. *If ye indeed fulfil*, etc., if the obedience be real and not imaginary, on that supposition only *ye do well* ; or *act beautifully*, in conformity with the beautiful name ye bear : *but if ye respect persons*, as is in fact the case, *ye commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors*. *The Scripture*, by synecdoche, the whole for a part, viz., Lev. 19 : 18. " Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself : I am Jehovah." Comp. Rom. 13 : 8-10 ; Gal. 6 : 2. *The Royal Law* : not only the pre-eminently excellent law, but the law proceeding from Jehovah, the King of the universe, by His Eternal Son ; the original promulgator of it before His incarnation. Compare Jno. 1 : 18 ; Heb. 12 : 26, with Ex. 3 : 2-17 ; 20 : 1, 2 ; Acts 7 : 35, 38. In this sense, the royal law is " the law of Christ."

Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself* : " This denotes quality, not equality ; general likeness, not sameness ; manner, not degree : " Gataker. With this happy and accurate explication before us, who can say, I have perfectly obeyed this precept ? And who can be justified by perfect obedience to a law which he so often transgresses ?

If any ask, *Who is my neighbor ?* the answer of our Lord may be found in Luke 10 : 30-37.

Respect of persons is peculiarly sinful in those that call themselves Christians, because it is a palpable violation of the Royal Law ; a law most excellent in itself, and of the highest possible authority ; a law originally promulgated,

and afterwards infallibly explained and perfectly obeyed by Christ Himself. Mat. 5 : 17, etc. ; Phil. 2 : 5-8 ; Mat. 3 : 15.

If any insanely imagine that sin is an indifferent thing, and hence disregard the law as the rule of right thinking, speaking, and acting, they should recollect that it originated from the Eternal by the Son of His love, and that its irrevocable authority was declared by God manifested in flesh. Let none, then, that reject Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and who take delight in sinning, flatter themselves that the Moral Law, in the substance of its precepts and penalty, will be found to be different in any other world of God's vast empire. For what are, what can be, the fundamental laws of the moral universe, if not supreme love to God and love to fellow intelligences as ourselves ? And the soul that sinneth in any world, shall not he die, or fall into utter wretchedness under the frown of God and the curse of His law ?

Since formalists and hypocrites boast of their external worship of God, the quickest and best way of confuting them is by showing their practical disregard to the love required in the second table of the law ; as James repeatedly does : *e.g.*, 1 : 22-27, and in this context and chapter. But the great duty required in the first table is emphatically stated, 1 : 12, and 2 : 5. This is *the kingly law*, the law of the Great King, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One ; the law of the Divine Messianic kingdom. And when that kingdom has come, the name of God will be hallowed, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.—Mat. 6 : 9, 10.

If ye respect persons, ye are sinful doers, convicted by the law as transgressors ; *for whoever should keep the whole law, but stumble in one thing* (supposing that for a moment to be possible) *he is guilty of all*, arrested, held in the grasp of all the commandments ; *for he that said*, etc., inasmuch as he disregards the authority of Him, “ the One law-giver and judge,” who enacted all the commandments.

He who transgresses one precept of the moral law virtually violates the whole of it. (1) For he thus treats with contempt the authority of God Himself. The insane and blasphemous meaning of it is, Who is Jehovah that I should obey Him? What care I for His law? (2) He that dares with both eyes open to sin against God once, what mere human or angelic agency can hinder him from doing so again and again, and for ever? The disposition manifested in disobeying God in one thing, is that which leads to the transgression of all His commandments. (3) All the precepts of the law are summed up in Love to God and our neighbor; and the second table leans on the first, God requiring us to love our neighbor from love to Himself, and reverence for His authority. A transgression, then, of any precept of the second table is a virtual violation of the whole law.

By one sin death entered into the world with all our woe. Rom. 5. And that sin was an indisputable proof of a want of love both to God and men, so that Adam, while disobeying the moral law in a positive form, virtually broke both the tables at once.

All sins, indeed, are not equal in enormity, but every sin shows contempt towards God, and is wedded to ill desert and guilt.

He that commits one sin cannot be saved by his own obedience to the other precepts, for God requires perfect obedience. Gal. 3 : 10. But where are they who commit one sin, and never more transgress? Certainly, not in this world.

8. There is perhaps a tinge of holy irony in *mentoi*; and if so the better rendering would be *forsooth*. 10. K L *τηρησαι*, B C S *τηρηση*; and so of the verb stumble: variations per itacismum (probably occasioned by the similar iota-like sounds). The same suggestion may be made as to the unimportant variations in the next verse. *Stumble*, by a metaphor = to sin, or trip in the path of duty: so in 3 : 2, twice. *Offend* primarily means to strike against.

¹² So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by

the law of liberty. ¹³ For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy ; and mercy rejoiceth* against judgment.

The partial and cruel must expect a severe judgment hereafter ; they being wholly without true religion, or not at all influenced by the law of love. The conclusion of the general topic is in the form of an exhortation : *So speak and so act, as about to be judged by the law of freedom* ; as becomes those who will soon be judged and by this rule or standard. Compare 1 : 25.

In a despotic government, law is but the expression of the will or whim of a fallible ruler ; but in God's moral government, law is the manifestation of His own absolutely holy freedom ; freedom from all injustice and partiality. Rom. 2 : 11-16. God as Almighty is not under the power or control of any ; and as the Holy One, all His decrees, revelations, or laws must be like Himself, perfectly free from the least tinge of sin. The Gospel or sacred Scriptures is the law of freedom here intended ; a law the characteristic of which is holy freedom, or impartiality. Every one will be judged according to the light he had, or that which was within his reach ; and hence "there is no partiality with God."

It is a law perfectly just, *for he shall have judgment without mercy that did no mercy* ; pure justice to the cruel, to those who never pitied and helped the miserable. Compare Ps. 18 : 25-27. Very different, however, shall it be to "the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy ;" and not only so, *but even now mercy exulteth in view of the judgment : i.e.,* the merciful man has no such fear of condemnation, but triumphs in anticipation of future and complete acquittal. He will not only have boldness in the day of judgment, but in this world rejoices greatly in the prospect of it. 1 Jno. 4 : 17, 18. Or, as Jude expresses it, "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Ver. 21. The

* marg. glorieth.

mercy shown by men is not the meritorious cause of their absolution at the judgment seat of Christ, as the text last cited shows ; but it is that without which none will be acquitted, and the proof that they are the right persons to be acquitted, according to His own promise. Mat. 5 : 7. And, indeed, how could Christ condemn the imitators of God and of Himself? 1 Jno. 4 : 16, 17, Gr. James, in the last clause of this verse, uses "mercy" as a metonymy of the abstract for the concrete term = the merciful ; it being the opposite to "him that showed no mercy." (See notes below.) Such metonymies of the quality for the persons possessing them are very natural to men of a lively imagination.

" In these green days
Reviving *sickness* lifts her languid head,
Life flows afresh, and young-ey'd *health* exalts
The whole creation round ; *contentment* walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase."

Motives addressed to fear as well as hope ought to be employed by the teachers of Christianity.

In speaking and acting our holiness will be promoted by recollecting the nearness of the judgment, the character of the judge, and the law by which we are to be judged.

If we respect persons, we will be very apt to speak harshly and act unkindly towards those whom we deem inferior to ourselves ; but the King of the universe and the Lord of this world is not to be trifled with, and the law by which we are to be tried is a law of freedom. Like its Great Author, it is no respecter of persons.

13. *Anileōs*, L and many other uncials, Thph and Chrysostom ; *aneleos*, A B C K S Oec : *kai* is not found in B C K L S cop sah syr ; but many cursives Thph have it, and A vg Oec have *de* : but whence did *de* originate, if *kai* be spurious? 2 *eleos*, A B S Thph ; *eleon* C K L.

In the last clause we prefer the common text, because the reading *de* cannot be otherwise explained, and such a perfectly abrupt transition is not after the manner of James—except in the form of a question, as in 5 : 6, last clause. But still the great mass of evidence is against the conjunction. Let us, then, translate without it : "For the judgment

(shall) be without mercy to him that did no mercy. Mercy exulteth in view of the judgment." While the sense is the same, every one instantly perceives that the omission of "and" or "but" in the construction of such sentences is by no means probable. And so the reading, By mercy ye will be raised above judgment (syr) is naturally accounted for. We take *kai* as=and yet, or but; and *kata* in the compound verb as simply intensive. It should not be translated *against*, for then it would be put before the noun in the genitive, as in 3 : 14. *Paul* indeed so uses the verb, Rom. 11 : 18, but *James* does not. The verb is used here to denote a holy gladness or exultation, as the simple verb in 1 : 9. In favor of the common explanation above stated and illustrated are the following considerations : (1.) The law of contrast : *the unmerciful* must expect no mercy in the judgment, but *the merciful* exult even now in the prospect of it. (2.) The constitution or make of James' mind ; delighting in the employment of metonymies, and other rhetorical figures. (3.) The use of the genitive in N. T. Greek, expressing the idea of relation in general (in respect of), like the construct state in Hebrew ; the kind of the relation to be determined in each instance by the nature and circumstances of the case. (See Nordheimer's Heb. Gr.) Here it is determined by the law of contrast, proving beyond intelligent debate that "mercy" is metonymically used. Examples of the genitive as above described : "Judges of evil thoughts," 2 : 4, as before explained ; the relation of the motives to the judges. "The dispersion of Pontus," the dispersed in Pontus. 1 Pet. 1 : 1. "Sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," with his blood. 1 Pet. 1 : 2. "Perils of rivers," on rivers ; "perils of robbers," proceeding from them. 2 Cor. 11 : 26. "The blood of his cross," the blood shed on his cross. Col. 1 : 20. And here, "Of the judgment," or "in respect of the judgment," is=in the view or prospect of it. Lit. *And mercy exulteth in respect of the judgment* ; which in our idiom is : *But mercy exulteth in view of the judgment*. The transcribers who wrote *eleon* understood James thus : he (the unmerciful man) despiseth the mercy of the judgment, as if he needed it not (and so Bretschneider) ; but that is an unnatural explanation, and not according to Jacobine usage ; the object of exultation, whether good or bad, being indicated by the preposition *in*, as in 1 : 9, 4 : 16. A cop, But let mercy exult, etc. : vg superexaltat autem misericordia judicium.

Calvin explains by describing the divine mercy as conquering or triumphing over his justice in the acquittal of the merciful in the great day ; but this disregards the law of contrast, as aforesaid ; and it is not best, even by a personification, to suppose any conflict or victory among the attributes of God, since it is written, Ps. 85 : 10 :

Mercy and truth meet together ;

Righteousness and peace kiss each other.

¹⁴ What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? ¹⁶ If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit? ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Proneness to idolatry was the great and conspicuous sin of the Israelites before the captivity at Babylon and neighboring countries; after their return, it was self-righteous formalism, reliance on a dead orthodoxy, or antinomianism covered with the thin veil of boastful piety: see especially the prophecy of Malachi. And the same sins stood out in giant proportions during the first century of our era.

Accordingly, James grapples with the sins then fashionable among the twelve dispersed times, and too common to men in all ages and nations. And here, vs. 14-26, with the sword of the Spirit, he smites the bald heads of Pharisaic formalists, and all boasters of a dead, inactive, fruitless faith.

Our view of the connection may be thus stated: There can be no true religion, no salvation, without faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One, ver. 1; but *what doth it profit, my brothers, if any one say that he hath faith* (faith such as I have before mentioned), *but hath not works?* *Is this faith* (lit. *the faith, i.e.,* without works; in our idiom, this faith) *able to save him?* The questions require a negative answer. Not at all. It is altogether useless as a means or instrumental cause by which to attain salvation, since it is a say-so faith, living only on the lips in a boastful profession.

The next illustrates the proposition that a mere profession of faith in Christ is wholly useless for the obtaining of salvation: Suppose a brother or sister thinly clad and without necessary food, and one from among you, one able to supply their wants, should say: I wish you well, and hope you may get the needed food and clothing, but I

can bestow on you now nothing but my sympathy and prayers ; of what use would such love be ? Could it be unfeigned ? *So also this faith, if it hath not works, is in itself dead.* Equally worthless as to salvation is a faith without its characteristic works. I call it, for argument's sake, faith, but it is *in itself dead* ; i.e., like one dead, or a body with no life in it, ver. 26. It is not true, living, or saving faith. Or, it is *dead by itself* ; like a corpse laid out in a room by itself ; which seems to be the meaning of "being alone" in Eng. Vers.

Paul also takes it for granted that faith cannot exist without its characteristic effects. Hence he speaks of "the work of faith," the work proceeding from faith. 1 Thes. 1 : 3 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 11, and of "the obedience of faith ;" and he expressly teaches that "faith worketh by love." Rom. 1 : 5 ; Gal. 5 : 6.

The self-deceived and hypocritical, while living in sin, have ever boasted of their faith, and of their professed relation to God and His covenant. But these were sharply reprov'd by John the Baptist, and by our Lord. Mat. 3 : 7-12 ; Jno. 8 : 39-47. And this dependence on a dead faith is still common ; multitudes not heeding our Saviour's warnings concerning it. Mat. 7 : 21-23, 26, 27.

Such a faith is a mere intellectual conviction of the truth of certain facts and doctrines, to which the understanding assents because of the overpowering evidence that attends them ; the heart meanwhile being cold and unmoved towards God and Christ, or the affections towards them fitful and changing as the wind. Such an assent, or so-called faith, was often given by those who saw Christ's works and heard His words, and to this day is cherished and openly declared by those who are convinced that the Christian Religion is from God ; but this faith leaves them under the dominion of sin ; it does not "purify their hearts" and "overcome the world." How, then, can it save them, when they are not saved, not saved from their sins ? Jno. 2 : 23 ; 7 : 31 ; 8 : 30-32 ; Mat. 1 : 21 ; Jas. 1 : 21.

He who has this dead faith is at best content with avoiding some gross and disgraceful sins, and engaging in outward acts of morality and worship. Luke 18 : 11, 12. His faith never works by love to Christ, but generally by a prudent regard to health, wealth, and reputation, or by slavish fear.

15. *Naked*=half dressed, thinly clad, without suitable clothing. 2 Cor. 11 : 27. The Orientals wear generally an inner garment or *tunic*, and an outer garment, *cloak* or mantle. (Acts 9 : 39, Gr., tunics and cloaks.) Hence to be naked, as here, is the same as to be without the mantle. 17. *Kath heautên*=*in itself*, or *as to itself*; a description of it as to its intrinsic nature, ver. 26 : or=*by itself*, as above explained : Paul was suffered to dwell *by himself*. Acts 28 : 16. See Acts 9 : 37. By the latter translation the metaphor is continued.

¹⁸ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works : Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

But some one will say; in opposition to what has been urged some one will, I suppose, make this objection : *Thou hast faith*, that is one way of manifesting piety, *and I have works*, that is another way. These are different modes of exhibiting a religious disposition. You are too strenuous in insisting on their inseparable union.

James answers : By no means. *Show me thy faith without* (aloof, apart, or separated from) *thy works*, a thing impossible in itself, *and I will show thee my faith by my works*, the only way of proving its existence.

Saving faith is a belief of the testimony which God has given concerning His Son, with a trust in Him alone for salvation. 1 Jno. 5 : 5-13 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 12 ; Ps. 2 : 12. As it exists within the heart, none can see it but the Omniscient. Nor can its existence be proved to men, or shown to the eye of reason, by mere words though never so pious, but only by its works, or characteristic effects.

It is to be feared that many deceive themselves as to what they call their faith. If it does not work by love to God and Christ, to the brethren and to men, it must be a faith dead by itself, laid out, like a corpse, within the brain

and on the tongue alone, connected with no fire of love in the heart. But "faith works by love": love is the hand or instrument by which faith works; and so faith is the main spring of obedience to God, and of beneficence to men.

It is also to be feared that many deceive themselves as to what they call their works. These are often mere heartless performances of certain outward actions; or external acts, showy and fair without, but arising from improper motives, originating not from faith and love, but from a supreme and constant regard to their own health, wealth, or reputation. From these and similar motives, men may avoid drunkenness, gluttony, and prodigality; give largely of their goods to feed the poor; pray publicly with seeming fervor and humility; eloquently explain and defend the Word of Truth, and even die as martyrs to maintain their doctrinal tenets; and after all be but as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 1 Cor. 13 : 1-3. The blood of Christ is necessary to cleanse the conscience from the guilt of such dead works proceeding from a dead faith. Heb. 9 : 14.

Some hold that it is a true believer that speaks in this verse: You have faith (let us grant it for the sake of argument), you boast much of it, but you can never prove it unless it produces the right kind of fruit: but the other explanation is less strained, and more pungent; more James-like. I will show thee my faith *by* my works; lit. *from* my works, from them as the only source of proof in the matter. Cf. 3 : 13. By attending to this usage, the expressions in vs. 21, 22, 24, 25, can be easily and correctly explained. A B C S vg cop syr *chōris*; K L *ek*. The omission of the second *sou* and *mou* in B S is of no importance.

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

That God is one: Deut. 6 : 4. The sacred writer here replies to a latent objection: I am no idolator or polytheist, as the Gentiles around me, but a believer in the one true God. *Thou actest beautifully!* virtuous conduct indeed! *even the demons believe it, and shudder.* (It is more emphatic to render the copulative *even*, as in Mark 1 : 27.) The first clause in the answer is ironical, as in Mark 7 : 9—"Beautifully ye

set aside the commandment of God, in order to keep your own tradition'' ! A mode of acting perfectly becoming such accomplished hypocrites ! *Shudder*, by a metaphor : like men trembling and shivering, in scenes of great danger. The sense is the same without the irony, but less emphatic : *Thou doest well*, so far right. Either way the point is : Can this faith save ? Faith (intellectual conviction and assent to indisputable truths), without love and obedience, the demons have. Can this faith save them ? And will a similar faith save you ? What is a faith working by slavish fear worth ?

There is but one devil, but many demons. (See notes below.) They are described in the Gospels as unclean and evil spirits, *i.e.*, depraved and malignant. Mat. 10 : 1 ; Luke 7 : 21. That demons and unclean or evil spirits are the same, is evident from Luke 8 : 2, 29, 30.

These spirits are also called angels that sinned, 2 Pet. 2 : 4, angels of the devil, Mat. 25 : 41, and demons subject to the authority of Satan, their prince, Mat. 12 : 24-28.

They are the implacable enemies of God and men, and have unmistakably shown it, monotheists as they in fact are, by being the chief authors and promoters of idolatry among men. So they have in a peculiar manner deceived the nations. They have, for example, deceived men by divination, Acts 16 : 16-18, by inciting and favoring the worship of themselves as intelligences superior to men, 1 Cor. 10 : 20, 21 ; Rev. 9 : 20 (Cf. Acts 17 : 18, Gr.) ; and by working prodigies to sanction the false doctrines which in their malicious subtlety they have prompted, or shall induce, men to propagate. 1 Tim. 4 : 1 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 13-15 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 9 ; Rev. 16 : 13, 14.

The demons especially showed their spite against mankind by the various diseases inflicted through their agency, when our Lord was on earth ; as is abundantly evident from the Gospels. Perhaps their malignity is in a peculiar manner directed against men, because the Christ of God did not lay hold of or succor them in their sins, but has left them a prey

to their own insane passions, and that without hope of pardon and salvation. Heb. 2 : 16 ; Mat. 8 : 29 ; 25 : 41, 46 ; Rev. 20 : 10 ; Jude, ver. 6.

The existence and malicious exploits of these demons or fallen angels are not a whit more inconsistent with God's moral government than the existence and wicked deeds of fallen men. They who will not believe what God has seen fit incidentally to reveal on this subject, and who have not themselves made the tour of the universe, ought not to scoff so much about it in their ignorance as some of them do ; a little more modesty and much more reverence would not be out of place.

James here speaks of their existence and wickedness as indisputable facts ; and in a few words, directly and by implication, gives us a leaf from the creed-book of demons. They hold that God is one. To be sure, they hate God ; but they know and believe that Jehovah is God alone ; that He is immutably just and truthful ; that there will be a judgment at the great day, and hence they fear greatly in view of their future aggravated punishment.

The devil, *ho diabolos*, lit. the slanderer or false accuser, is one of the peculiar names of Satan, 4 : 7. (Only once in the singular and without the article, Jno. 6 : 70, *diabolos* is used by a metaphor to describe Judas Iscariot as devil-like : cf. Mat. 16 : 23.) The plural, *diaboloî*, slanderers, false accusers, is used in the N. T. only of men, 1 Tim. 3 : 11 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 3 ; Tit. 2 : 3 ; never of the fallen angels. In every place of the Gospels where in the English Version we read of the casting out of a devil or devils, the Greek is *demon* or *demons*. So also in the following passages : 1 Cor. 10 : 20, 21 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 1 ; Jas. 2 : 19 ; Rev. 9 : 20, demons ; and Rev. 16 : 14 ; 18 : 2. (Once, in Acts 17 : 18, where Athenians are introduced as speaking, *daimonia* is used as in classic Greek = demons as objects of worship (compare Rev. 9 : 20), and hence rightly rendered *gods*.) The word Demons is never used in the New Testament to denote the spirits of departed men.

Such a marked distinction in the original should not have been disregarded in the translation. The Devil is the prince, the demons are the unclean and malignant spirits who do his bidding ; the fallen angels under the dominion of Satan, the enemy of God and men,

²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? ²² Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? ²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. ²⁴ Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

James now proves from examples that faith without works is dead. Our view of this context is stated in the following paraphrase: 20. Art thou willing to know, O empty pretender to faith and piety, that faith apart from works has no spiritual life in it; that such a faith is characteristic, not of a true believer, but of an unrenewed person? 21. If you desire to know the truth in this matter, let it be decided by what the Scripture says concerning the ancestor of our race. We all as Israelites admit that he was a truly righteous man, or had saving faith. How then was the genuineness of his faith shown or proved? Was not the proof derived from his works, and especially when he offered Isaac, his son, upon the altar? 22. Unless greatly prejudiced, you must from this example understand that Abraham's faith as the chief proximate cause co-operated with his works, and that from works as the source of proof his faith was completely demonstrated; 23, and in this way the Scripture was verified, or its truth fully confirmed, which says, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness: also, those in which he is called the friend of God. (Gen. 15 : 6; Isa. 41 : 8; 2 Chron. 20 : 7.) 24. Ye see then (resuming his direct address to the brethren, ver. 14, which had been interrupted by the refutation of objections), that from works a man is proved righteous, and not from faith only; not from a faith without works or obedience to God, such as vain men boast of: vs. 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 26.

O *vain* man: an elliptical mataphor = thou who art *empty*, or wholly without true faith and piety, the faith which God's chosen have: 2 : 5; 1 : 3. *Art thou willing to*

know it? Men in religious matters often manifest an astonishing ignorance, prejudice, and unwillingness to receive the truth in the love of it.

“If the people wish to be deceived, let them be deceived,” say wicked men and malignant demons; suiting the action to the word in ways and means adapted to their several natures.—Mat. 13 : 4, 19; 2 Cor. 11 : 13, 14; 2 Tim. 3 : 13; Rev. 19 : 20.

Not so the sacred writers, not so the excellent of the earth, who by word and deed say, “Be not deceived.” Why will ye die by embracing falsehood and rejecting truth? “Buy the truth, and sell it not;” the truth about God, about Christ, about yourselves, and the way to eternal life. If thou art willing to know it, search with a prayerful teachable spirit the Holy Scriptures.—II. Tim. 3 : 14-17.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered, etc. Lit. *having offered*; the participle indicating both the time and manner of the justification spoken of= when he offered and by so doing. The intention of Abraham, with the actions attending it, is considered as an actual offering; or the will is taken by metonymy for the deed. *By works*: lit. *out of, or from works*, as the fountain or source of proof: as in ver. 18. (So we understand Rom. 1 : 4. The Son of God as to His holy divine nature, the proof derived from His resurrection from among the dead.) The preposition is used in the same manner in vs. 22, 24, 25, and in 3 : 13. It is equivalent to *by* in the sense of way or means of proving; not in the sense of a concurrent cause of his justification, which is evident from the next verse.

Paul uses *justify* in a forensic sense, referring to acquittal at the judgment seat of God; *James* uses it in a popular sense, derived from the forensic one. With him, *to justify* is the same as *to show* (ver. 18) or *prove to be just or righteous*; *to vindicate*, or clear from objections and accusations. (“Man’s wrath doth not work out a vindication of God.” Jas. 1 : 20.)

The word is so used by other inspired writers: as in Mat.

11 : 19—"Wisdom *is justified* of her children," *i.e.*, proved righteous, vindicated, or cleared from the objections stated in the preceding part of the verse. Luke 10 : 29—"But he, willing *to justify* himself ;" desirous of showing that he was righteous, of vindicating or clearing himself from the implied censure of not having done as Christ enjoined, ver. 28.

In English also, not only the Pauline, but the Jacobine sense of the word, is common ; and the best writers use, justify, or vindicate, according as their ear trieth words :

"That to the hight of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

"Laugh where we must, be candid where we can ;
But vindicate the ways of God to man."

Still, to cut off all possibility of mistake on the part of the unlearned, it would be better to translate as follows : *Was not Abraham our father proved righteous from works, offering Isaac his son upon the altar ?* He was no vain man, no empty pretender to faith and piety, but showed that he was righteous by obeying God ; proved it by his perfect willingness to sacrifice that son who was not only the object of his tender love, but the promised ancestor of the Messiah.

Dost thou see (with the mind's eye on this remarkable example, can you without prejudice miss seeing it ?), *that faith was working with his works, and that from the works faith was made perfect ?* Gr.

No part of this context has been more misunderstood and perverted than these words. *To see* is the same as to understand ; a metaphor in daily use. *Dost thou see that faith* (his faith) *was working with his works* : another metaphor. Faith, like the chief agent, or proximate cause, was working with the associated effects, *i.e.*, the works set in motion by her influence and activity : *faith* the internal cause, and *his works*, the actions relating to the offering of Isaac, the concurrent effects produced by it. (In 1 : 3, faith is the

cause and patience the effect.) *The concurrent effects*, not the concurrent causes, as many imagine. Abraham's faith, then, did not exist without works, but as the cause co-operated with them as the effects. His faith, for example, led him to cleave the wood for the burnt offering ; to rise early and go to the appointed place ; to take the fire in his hand and the knife ; to build the altar, lay the wood in order, bind Isaac and lay him on the altar, and stretch forth his hand to slay his son.—Gen. xxii. These are *the works* referred to by James, *the concurrent effects* produced by his faith.

And dost thou see that from the works his faith was made perfect ? That from the works as the source of proof his faith was perfectly demonstrated ? Made perfect in exhibition, shown to perfection by the actions it produced. So in 2 Cor. 12 : 9—“ My strength *is made perfect* in weakness ” : not, surely, a deficiency to be supplied in Christ's omnipotence, but My power is perfectly proved in your weakness ; that is the element in which it shows itself to perfection. *Was made perfect* is also = reached its *telos*, or consummation, the highest degree. (1 Jno. 4 : 17.)

And in this way the Scripture (Gen. 15 : 6) *was fulfilled*, verified or its truth fully confirmed, *which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness : or, as righteousness.* (Compare Rom. 2 : 26.) Righteousness by metonymy for the means or instrumental cause of obtaining it. God looked at it in that light, or as judge in the matter it was in this manner legally reckoned as belonging to Abraham. It will not do to reply, This is Pauline usage ; for James begins this topic by asking : Can this faith *save* him ? Can it be the instrumental cause of his salvation ? Comp. 5 : 15, 20. Can a man who boasts of a faith without works be justified and saved ?

But why does James here quote the same passage as Paul in the fourth chapter of his epistle to the Romans ? For two reasons : 1. Incidentally to show that he agrees with Paul as to the mode of Abraham's justification before God. 2. To show, which is his main design, that the faith which

was the instrumental cause of Abraham's justification before God was a faith unfeigned ; not such as vain men boast of ; not a faith spending itself in merely pious words apart from its appropriate effects ; not a faith without love and obedience to God such as the demons have, but one perfectly proved to exist by the concurrent effects which it produced in one of the greatest tests to which any human being was ever subjected.

And by his faith thus working were verified those other passages of Scripture in which he is called *the friend of God*. His signal obedience springing from faith proves that he is rightly designated by that most honorable name, the Friend of God = a lover of God, and loved by Him ; and that eminently ; for friendship without reciprocal love is impossible.

Let us suppose for a moment that Abraham had refused to obey God as to the offering of Isaac, what would it have proved ? That his faith was not living or saving, and hence that the declaration concerning it in Gen. 15 : 6, was not true. But he did not refuse to obey Jehovah in his great trial ; and so he has become " a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men." And now who can dispute the genuineness of his faith ? He was indeed a true believer, and Satan himself must admit it. We see, then, that the faith by which Abraham was proved righteous was most unfeigned, a faith that worked by love to God and obedience to Him in the greatest difficulties ; not by a dead faith without works, of which the self-deceived and hypocritical boast.

The command as to the offering of Isaac was a trial of Abraham's faith by God ; not for the information or satisfaction of the Omniscient, but to give an unexceptionable example to all succeeding generations that faith without its characteristic works is dead, and with them living.—Gen. 22 : 1, 12. *Now I perceive*, or, *Now have I seen* (according to the primary signification of the word) *that thou fearest God,*" etc. Comp. Heb. 11 : 17-19.

By faith, leaning on the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 1 : 1, Gr., *we are*, on the ground of that righteousness and our legal union with Him as our representative and surety, *declared by God to be righteous in Christ*, 2 Cor. 5 : 21 ; *and hence acquitted from all condemnation*, Rom. 8 : 1, or perfectly forgiven, and *have a clean right and title to eternal life*, Acts 26 : 18. But this faith, the receptive organ or means of receiving Christ's righteousness, Rom. 5 : 17, must be a real living thing in the soul, and not a mere pretence. Accordingly, it is *by works*, the fruits or effects of faith, that we are vindicated from all charges of hypocrisy brought against us by men or Satan, and shown to be truly friends and lovers of God.

Faith is the chief operative principle of obedience, both internal and external. Hence James describes it thus : It, when proved, effecteth patience, or steadfast endurance, 1 : 3 ; it leads to and moves in prayer, 1 : 6 ; trusts in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One, inciting to the imitation of His condescension, grace, and impartiality, 2 : 1 ; it works steadily in holy obedience amidst the greatest trials, as did the faith of Abraham. This is the faith of God's chosen, 2 : 5, very unlike that of vain men and demons.

20. A K L S vg cop 1 Thph Oec have *nekra*, dead ; B C sah *argē*, inactive. 22. A S *sunergei* ; B syr vg *sunērgei*. 24. K L Oec have *toinun*, but not A B C S cop syr.

²⁵ Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way ? ²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Rahab was a Gentile, and of but little faith when compared with Abraham : *Likewise was not Rahab also the former harlot proved righteous from works, welcoming the messengers, and sending them out by another way ?* The participles are indicative both of time and manner, as in ver. 21. *Welcome*, receive kindly, and entertain as a guest ; as in Luke 10 : 38 :

19 : 6 ; Acts 17 : 7. *Another way* : Jos. 2 : 15. (Comp. Heb. 11 : 31.)

She had faith in Jehovah as the true God before the arrival of the spies at her house, and believed that He intended to give the Hebrews the land of Canaan. Jos. 2. But how was this faith proved to be genuine? By kindly receiving the messengers sent by Joshua, and by her solicitude and earnest efforts to keep them from danger and death. If she had said : I know that Jehovah only is God, and that He has given you this land ; but in my peculiar circumstances I cannot help you ; get out of my house instantly : then she would have had a faith without works, a faith not living, but dead.

If faith in God or Christ truly lives in the heart, it must and does show itself, no matter how feeble it may be, whenever an opportunity occurs. So it was with Rahab, and with the penitent who was crucified at the side of Christ.

Sometimes those who are brought up in ignorance and crime gladly receive the Word of Life, while many of the evangelized insolently reject it. The power, freeness, and riches of God's grace are shown in bringing the vilest sinners to the knowledge of the truth, and to that obedience which springs from a living faith.

If Rahab and Manasseh and Saul of Tarsus were saved, why should we despair of the mercy of God in Christ? And how can we, if renewed, be withheld from expressing our gratitude by the most cordial and uniform obedience?

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. The conclusion, or main position often repeated, vs. 14, 17, 18, 20, 24, is once more stated, and illuminated by a simile : As the body apart from the spirit is destitute of natural life, so also this faith without works is destitute of spiritual life. As the body when the soul has gone in external appearance resembles a man, yet is nothing but his dead outside shell, cold, stiff, and loathsome to beholders ; so this faith without works has nothing but the outward appearance of faith, perfectly motionless as

to all holy actions, and as such loathsome to the eye of the Holy God.

There is no contradiction between James and Paul as to the doctrine of justification, as is evident from the main design of each. *The question discussed by James* is : By what kind of faith can a man be saved ? How can a professed believer be vindicated, justified, or acquitted from the charge of vanity, that is, of self-deception or hypocrisy ? And the answer is : Not by a faith apart from works, but by a living, genuine faith, producing the fruits of holiness : as above explained.

The question handled by Paul is : How can a convicted transgressor of God's law be justified by the Holy Legislator himself ; or be declared righteous and acquitted at His judgment seat ? And the answer is : Not by works, that is, works of his own, but only by faith in Christ's blood, faith leaning on the righteousness of the Redeemer, imputed to him by the Judge of all. Rom. 3 : 19-26 ; 5 : 19 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21.

Now, let us ask Paul how the genuineness of this faith is to be proved. He answers thus : " For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision ; but *faith which worketh by love*. Gal. 5 : 6. Comp. Tit. 1 : 15, 16 ; Gal. 5 : 24. And does not Heb. 11 abundantly prove that faith unfeigned is the chief proximate cause of all holy obedience ; that it cannot exist without its characteristic works ; precisely as James teaches ? And if faith worketh by love, can we forget what is written in 1 Cor. 13 ?

CHAPTER III.

Synopsis of Contents.

I. True religion distinguished from that which is false by the way in which men employ their tongues, whether in public or private discourse.

1. Let not many become teachers, 1, 2.
2. The power of the tongue for good illustrated, 3, 4.
3. Its power for evil illustrated, 5, 6.
4. Untamable by any mere human agency, 7, 8.
5. The shocking inconsistency and duplicity manifested in the use of it, 9-12.

II. True and false religion further distinguished: the former showing itself in various forms of love; the latter, in various forms of malignity, 13-18.

¹ My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation (marg., judgment).

² For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body.

In 1-12 vs., we have a development of 1 : 26. Lit. *My brothers, let not many become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a greater judgment. For in many things we all stumble. If any one stumbleth not in word, the same is a full grown man, able to bridle also the whole body.*

Knowing is a causal participle = inasmuch as we teachers know. *A greater judgment*: a trial goes before *judgment*, i.e., the sentence of the judge, whether for acquittal or condemnation: *a greater judgment*; greater in its extent, or in the things to be judged. *To stumble*, by a metaphor, is to sin; trip or make missteps in the path of duty.

We Christians *one and all* (as the Greek strictly taken means) stumble. Another metaphor in *full grown* : like an adult ; a man in Christ, in opposition to babes or children in Christ ; as in 1 : 4 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 6 ; 14 : 20 ; Heb. 5 : 14. *To bridle the whole body* is a substitution = to restrain or govern all the appetites, desires and passions.

A foolish ambition to rush into the chair of teachers in Christ's school, or visible Church, is the sin here forbidden. Let not many disciples become teachers. The prohibition is thus enforced : 1. Teachers will be liable to a trial which shall embrace all their official acts ; and, if found unfaithful, their punishment will be greater than that of others. Mat. 24 : 48-51. Conscience also testifies to the equity of such a trial and sentence. 2. Because all Christians stumble often in a plain path, and it is not wise or safe for many to attempt walking in the road pointed out in Scripture for pastors and teachers. 3. No one but an adult Christian is competent to be a teacher in Christ's school ; one who does not sin habitually with his tongue ; one who is able by divine grace to subdue and rightly control his appetites, desires and passions. For if he is unable to govern himself, what a sorry spectacle he will present to a mourning Church and a jeering world !

Bishops, presbyteries, and other clerical associations, may license and ordain men as teachers in Christ's Church who have not that government of themselves here described by James, a servant of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ ; but what will our Lord say and decide about it at His coming ?

Teachers often remind their hearers of the judgment to come. The same judgment should ever be before their own eyes. Have they such a control over their tongues and passions that they will not be ashamed to have all their official acts inspected by Him who searcheth the heart ? Well may the holiest be filled with holier awe, and stimulated to more honest and earnest efforts to meet with His approbation.

The Jews of the first century prided themselves much

in their knowledge of Scripture, and many of them, however morally inconsistent, thought they were fully qualified to become official teachers.—Rom. 2 : 17–24. The prohibition of James, then, is to the point ; since it was no lack of charity on his part to assume that too much of this sour leaven was working in the hearts of the Israelites addressed, even in the truly renewed among them.

The Lord Christ has instituted the visible Church, and appointed teachers in it until the end of the age, or present dispensation. Mat. 28 : 18–20, Gr. ; Eph. 4 : 11, etc.

To teach in Christ's school is an office so honorable, and a work so influential, that it may well be desired. 1 Tim. 3 : 1. But it must be a prevailing holy desire to serve Christ, and not to show off ourselves. And it must be accompanied with the requisite gifts, intellectual and spiritual, such as aptness to teach and self-government. And they who push themselves into this office without these gifts, do unspeakable injury to the cause of truth and the growth of Christians.

And whatever mistakes presbyteries and other ecclesiastical bodies may make in setting apart men as teachers, they surely are as good judges of the necessary qualifications as those who are in hot haste to exhibit their own gifts, real or supposed. And it is not right, in ordinary circumstances, even for the most gifted, to disregard the plain injunctions of Christ's apostle. 1 Tim. 4 : 14 ; 5 : 22, 24, 25. And how can self-constituted teachers be restrained, if they preach not Christ's Gospel, but a misnamed gospel of their own invention ? Acts 15.

It is a great mistake, to say the least, to suppose that we cannot serve our Redeemer well unless we are officers in his Church. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing ? Are all teachers ? 1 Cor. 12. Should many, however feeble in intellect or grace, desire it ? Many laborers, indeed, are needed in all parts of the great field, the world ; but must they all be official teachers ? Would it be amiss for private Christians to accompany missionaries, whenever

possible, at home and abroad, and show by their beautiful walk, and in their ordinary occupations, as well as by other methods, the excellency of the Christian religion? Everywhere indeed there is plenty of work to do, and there is a holy delight in serving the Lord Christ, 1 : 25, and nothing done from love to Him will be unnoticed in the great day. Mat. 10 : 42.

Let not many become teachers, *mē polloi didaskaloi ginesthe* : *polloi* is the subject nominative, and *didaskaloi* the predicative nominative, of the verb. Calvin holds that self-appointed censors, or reprovers of others' faults, are meant. But this is wholly contrary to the usage of the noun, and is not required by the following context. Lange : Do not become many teachers ; and explains it of fanatical teachers. Does James, then, forbid a host of such teachers to appear, and approve of some, any, or even one of that sort? Or did he fear that the converted Israelites would become an army of fanatics? "Bridling," in 1 : 26, is a metaphor ; but "to bridle the whole body" is a substitution. It is incongruous to suppose the phrase metaphorical ; the bridle with its bit being put about the head and in the mouth, not around the whole body of a horse. If we should not sin with the tongue, neither should we with *the pen*, "the tongue's vicar."

³ Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us ; and we turn about their whole body. ⁴ Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

Illustrations of the *necessity* of properly regulating the tongue, and *its power for good* when so governed : comp. ver. 5. *So also*, etc., *i.e.*, as the tongue is a little member like a bit and helm, so also is it like a fire, etc. James thus intimates the point of transition from the discourse concerning the tongue as rightly restrained and guided to that of the tongue as unrestrained and unguided. Hence there was no need of a formal application of the illustrations contained in vs. 3, 4. The design of the illustrations is also evident from what he had just said of not stumbling in word, and of bridling the whole body.

If we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us ;

then we turn about their whole body : and if we restrain the tongue by a holy will, then all our passions can to a great degree be tamed and subdued. *Behold also the ships, although they are so great and by fierce winds driven, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the will of the steersman may determine :* and in a storm of invective put in motion against you by malicious men, when

“ Loudly blow
Contending tempests on your naked head ;”

your safety and dignity as a Christian depend on restraining or rightly guiding the tongue by a holy inflexible will.

It is by a physical impulse proceeding from acts of the will that a rider governs the horse with the bit, and the pilot the largest ships amid the wildest storms ; and ought not men who thus control the inferior animals and lifeless things, govern themselves ?

Our *obligation* thus to govern the tongue arises from the fact that we are men, and as such should be directed, not by instincts and passions, but by reason and conscience wedded to a holy will, and by God’s law, which is holy, just, and good.

The *necessity* of it is very obvious. When a Christian finds his passions beginning to be unruly, it is high time for the hand of his will to seize the helm. But if he let the rudder go, or permit his tongue to whirl madly about, that very moment a storm of passion may appear and prevail that will injure his reputation, lessen his usefulness, and drive far away from him the peace and joy proceeding from a healthy conscience.

Its power for good, when rightly governed, is equally evident. It is astonishing how soon our evil desires and passions subside, if at first we keep calm, cool, and collected. It is a commendation of Job at the beginning of his great trial, that “ he sinned not with his lips ;” implying that evil was at work within, but that he overcame it by bridling

his tongue. Thus his holy will conquered his sinful passions.

Perfectly right is it for a professed minister of Christ to cultivate and employ his imagination in order to illustrate the Word of Truth ; provided that it be indeed done for that end, and not to exhibit himself as a genius or prodigy ; provided also that he truly cultivate and discipline it ; otherwise his imagination, like an unbridled steed, may throw him into a ditch, and he appear in a bad plight before discerning hearers.

Illustrations and rhetorical figures may be used as burning-glasses, to concentrate light and heat suddenly and powerfully on the understanding and conscience ; as in this and the following context. Or they may be employed as petty kaleidoscopes, simply to amuse big children, as is commonly done by the Rev. Mr. Froth, Dr. Slapdash, and their many imitators.

Perfectly wrong is it for any, and especially for a teacher in Christ's school, to speak under the wild, mad influence of unholy desires and passions. When our Lord licenses a teacher, the diploma He gives him is a spirit of love.—Jno. 21 : 15-17.

3. A K L vg, *ei de*, and so also B S, if *eide* should be written *ei de*, as is probable : C *ide* : S is singular in having *gar* (illustrative, as in 2 : 1) after *eide*. The first reading, *But if* we put, etc., is now generally adopted by critical editors. *Hormē*, impetus, onset ; hence, eagerness, volition, or will. Cf. Acts 14 : 5. In ver. 3, *kai*=then, introduces the apodosis ; as in 2 : 4, and 2d *kai*, in 4 : 15. *Determine* : see how the verb is used, 4 : 4.

⁶ Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter (marg., a wood) a little fire kindleth ! ⁷ And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity : so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course (wheel) of nature ; and it is set on fire of hell.

Illustrations of the dreadful effects produced by an unbridled tongue ; or its power for evil. *So also the tongue is*

a little member, a small instrument, but producing vast results, not only for good, but also for evil : see the explanation in the preceding paragraph. *And yet boasteth great things* : the verb in the Septuagint means to be blasphemously haughty ; to speak with impious insolence ; as in Ezek. 16 : 50 ; Zep. 3 : 11. Comp. Ps. 12 : 3, 4, marg. ; Rev. 13 : 5. And so here : The tongue is a little member, but speaks with impious insolence ; blaspheming God, as well as reviling men. The speech of Rabshakeh is a perfect specimen of this blasphemous arrogance. 2 Ki. 18 : 19, etc. Comp. Isa. 14 : 13. (The tongue, by synecdoche, for the person using it.)

Behold, how great a forest a little fire kindleth ! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue under the sway of unholy desires and passions is like a fire ; rapid, extensive, and destructive as to the effects produced. A little fire left by a careless hunter among the dry leaves may soon destroy the life and beauty of a forest. (Ps. 83 : 14.) So reckless words, and much more those which are malicious, fall often on a sensitive place, while he who feels the burning pain communicates the fire of his hate to others. Thus there arise contentions in families, neighborhoods, and large communities ; fearful conflagrations of human passions.

A world of iniquity : lit. *The world of iniquity*, or unrighteousness ; or, *the adorning of iniquity* : *kosmos* primarily meaning good order ; hence ornament, garnishing or beauty. It is applied to the physical universe, owing to its admirable order and beauty, 1 Cor. 4 : 9 ; and to our physical globe for the same reason, 1 Pet. 1 : 20 ; also to the dress of women, their bodily garnishing, 1 Pet. 3 : 3.

The phrase in the original, as here used, is not easy to be understood, and is variously explained. 1. Some take it in apposition with what goes before : “ And the tongue is a fire, that world of iniquity ! ” Most of those who thus translate and punctuate take “ world ” by hyperbole. So Calvin : “ A very little piece of flesh contains within itself a whole world of iniquity.” 2. Others connect it with

what follows : "And the tongue is a fire. That world of iniquity, the tongue, is among our members," etc.: omitting *so*. (See notes below.) In this way the arrangement is different, but the sense remains the same. 3. We follow Œcumenius, and understand it thus : "And the tongue is a fire. It is *the adorning of iniquity*. So is the tongue," etc. We suppose a metaphor and metonymy combined in "adorning" : adorning by metonymy for adorning ; the act or effect for the cause. The metaphor appears by giving the full phrase : the tongue is the adorning of iniquity. The vast extent of its evil influence is metaphorically portrayed by fire kindling a great forest ; but here James shows how by specious arts men not only extenuate their sins, but deck them in the robes of virtue ; garnish the vile harlot with the dress of a chaste woman.

Let us allude to a single specimen of these arts by this expert adorning, and its vicar, the pen. The great butchers of mankind, men of towering selfish ambition, like Alexander and Napoleon ; what do many historians and others say of them ? That they

"Waded through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ?"

No, indeed. The paint and varnish are at hand, and hence we hear and read that the great butchers were great heroes, and their murders brave and magnanimous deeds. So they adorn iniquity.

Behold, how great a forest a little fire kindleth ! And the tongue is a fire. It is the adorning of iniquity. So is the tongue set among our members : it has such a position and office as the interpreter of our thoughts and volitions, *that it defileth the whole body*, spots or stains it (1 : 27 ; Jude ver. 23) ; which is used by substitution. It morally disgraces and degrades, throws the plague-spots of depravity, or increases its power, in the whole of man's complex constitution.

Evident it is that when men talk with delight of sin, they thereby strengthen the depraved disposition, polluting

themselves all over ; making their bodily appetites more gross and degrading ; their wills more fixed and determined on what is evil ; so that even their mind and conscience become defiled, or the ability to discern the true and the right, with a longing to find them, gradually but surely die in the soul. And in this way the tongue staineth the whole body.

So is the tongue placed among our members, that it defileth the whole body, *and in particular setteth on fire the wheel of nature*, etc. Another substitution : It excites, and to their great injury, the natural passions of men. The inner wheel in man's complex constitution is desire, or a longing for good. This desire is like a wheel to a chariot ; it facilitates motion : it is that which helps men forward in the pursuit of good, real or seeming. (See notes on 1 : 14, 15.) But the tongue sets it on fire, mars or ruins it ; *i.e.*, human speech constantly inflames the natural passions, and happiness is destroyed by the excessive indulgence of these passions, as the axle of a wheel is inflamed by its rapid motion. *The wheel of nature*, or birth, is = the natural wheel ; as *The face of his nature*, or birth, is = his natural face, 1 : 23. (Other interpretations are noticed below.)

When Job gave his mouth full play, when he sinned with his lips, although right in his main position, he set on fire the natural wheel of his friends, or by his rapid vehement discourse inflamed their natural passions—and his own.

And if truly pious men occasionally so act, what must be said of the orators of the devil ? Exceedingly skilful are they in inflaming this natural wheel. Witness their power herein in the terrible revolution that broke out in France, towards the close of the eighteenth century. How was it that Peter the hermit started the crusades in Europe, for the so-called recovery of the holy sepulchre ? Simply by setting fire to this wheel of our nature. And when the excellent of the earth were led as sheep to the slaughter ; before they killed the innocent, did they not set on fire the passions of the ignorant ? And when persecutions arose in

the visible Church itself, was not the very same method adopted?

And it is set on fire of hell; inflamed by *hell*: aroused to greater wickedness by the agency of Satan and his angels; a metonymy of the place for its inhabitants.

The fact of satanic agency in the matter does not lessen human responsibility. He who sets fire to a building, and he who incites him thereto, are both guilty. The devil and his demons shall be punished for their part in inflaming human depravity in word and deed, and men, besides other reasons, for listening to them. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you, 4 : 7.

Recapitulation : 1. The tongue of the wicked is not bridled by a holy will, and hence in reference to God and divine things they speak with blasphemous insolence. 2. In the effects produced, their speech is like fire, kindling a great forest; rapid, extensive, and destructive. 3. Their tongue is the adorning of unrighteousness, the beautifier of sin; painting it, and showing it decked in the robes of virtue. 4. As the interpreter of our appetites, thoughts, and volitions, it increases the virulence of a depraved disposition in the whole of man's complex constitution. 5. It is, in particular, the chief instrument employed in arousing the natural passions of men, and of ruining them by their inordinate indulgence. 6. Its mischievous power is also increased by "the fiery darts of the malignant one."

Men who thus employ the tongue may pretend to be religious, but their religion is vain, 1 : 26. Among such must be classed *the heedless talkers*; they who talk for the sake of talking; about any and every thing, their tongue ever moving like water over a stony shallow brook. These are not in the highest class in Satan's school, but they are always babbling, utterly regardless of the consequences of their foolish and random speeches. *The lascivious talkers*; no matter how cunningly the impurity be veiled: "a sepulchre opened is their mouth." *The malicious talkers*; such as the perpetually angry, rabid and snappish as wolves; slanderers,

whisperers, and all liars ; virulent disputers and fanatical orators, whether by pen or tongue. Also, *the irreverent talkers* : profane and blasphemous in their hard speeches against God and Christ, or perfectly fretful and fault-finding concerning their lot in the world—graduates and residents in Satan's college.

5. *Hulē*, here, is not=materia, timber, or fuel, but to *silva*, a wood, or forest ; as in the Sept. Job 38 : 40 ; Isa. 10 : 17. How great a forest *a little fire* kindleth ! A K L syr Thph : how great a fire, how great a forest, it kindleth ! B C S vg ; but it is very common for a transcriber to write the same or a similar word twice.

6. *So* is not found in B S vg syr, but L Thph Oec have it : S vg, the wheel of our nature.

Ho kosmos tēs adikias : The Syriac translator ingeniously supposes an ellipsis : Now the tongue is a fire, (and) the world of sin (like a forest). If *kosmos* be taken in its usual sense, then the Syriac paraphrase is the best mode of explanation : The tongue is a fire, and the world of unrighteousness a forest ; *i.e.*, the tongue is like a fire, and sinful men like a forest inflamed by it. But if we translate and supply thus : (It is) the adorning of iniquity : then this expression is a predicate of the same subject ; and a new and important thought is introduced. Bengel takes *kosmos* as the subject, because it has the article. But when the ellipsis is supplied it appears that both subject and predicate have it ; (the tongue is) the *kosmos*, etc. *Kathistatai* = is set down, put or placed : cf. 4 : 4.

The wheel of nature. The Syriac translator takes *genesis* as = generation, and paraphrases thus : It inflameth the series of our generations that run on like a wheel : but to liken men to wheels that start at birth, is forced. The same sense is elicited by those who take "wheel" by metonymy for the course it runs, and nature, or birth, by the same trope for living men, and the full phrase for the round of life. They who assume that "nature," or birth, here means created things, and the wheel of nature the orb of our world, or of the universe, push into the words a very unnatural hyperbole : the tongue sets our world on fire ; or, it puts the universe in a blaze !

The choice lies between the metonymical explanation and the one by substitution : we prefer the latter.

⁷ For every kind (marg., nature) of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind (nature of man) : ⁸ but the tongue can no man tame ; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

The tongue is untamable by any merely human agency : *For every kind of wild beasts*, etc. The tongue, as just described, is inflamed by hell, *for* it is wholly ungovernable by any skill, ingenuity, or power of men. They have showed, and still show, the power of their intellect in subduing various wild animals of the land, the air, and the sea ; but not in getting the mastery over themselves ; not in taming their own tongue, or that of others—masters and slaves at the same time ! 2 Pet. 2 : 19.

Man's ingenuity and skill in overpowering the lower animals is, as Manton truly says, a relic and proof of his original perfect dominion over them : not wholly lost by the fall. Gen. 1 : 26 ; 9 : 2. It is also foretold that this perfect dominion shall be restored to mankind at the advent and reign of Christ on earth. Isa. xi. with 65 : 17–25.

It is *an unruly evil*, an ungovernable source or means of wickedness ; like a vicious brute that cannot be held down, or restrained. It is *full of death-bearing poison* : like a serpent's tongue. And no worldly man can prescribe the right antidote ; and if he could, or did, who would be willing to take it ? That antidote is the sweetly efficacious power of the Holy Spirit, given to them that ask. Luke 11 : 13. And the operations of that Spirit in the soul not only infinitely surpass the power of men and demons, but also greatly exceed all that we can ask, or even think. 1 Jno. 4 : 4 ; Eph. 3 : 20.

7. *Phusis*, nature as produced, ingenium ; instinct, or inborn sagacity of animals. *Every nature* ; some of every kind with divers natural constitutions. Tamed by the human nature, ingenii hominum, by the mother-wit of men, or their superior natural faculties. 8. *An unruly evil*, *akatascheton kakon* ; so C K L syr Thph Oec. (Perhaps *thērion* is understood=an unruly vicious brute.) This, the common text, is preferable to *a restless evil*, *akatastaton kakon*, which appears in A B S vg cop. (But if we suppose the ellipsis just suggested, then the sense is : a restless vicious brute. This conjecture is not far-fetched, for James adds : It is *full of deadly poison* ; not only ungovernable, but deadly ; as fatal to the soul as the poison of adders to the body. Ps. 140 : 3.)

⁹ Therewith bless we God, even the Father ; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. ¹¹ Doth a fountain at the same place send forth sweet *water* and bitter ? ¹² Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries ? either a vine figs ? so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

The shocking inconsistency and duplicity manifested in the use of the tongue, even by some who fancy that they are religious : cf. 1 : 26.

We bless God, when we adore and praise Him for what he is in Himself, and for the manifestations which He has made of Himself. We bless Him as *the Father*, when we profess to be His children by regeneration, 1 : 18, 27, and express our gratitude for that signal favor. If this be done from the heart, as well as by the lips, it is acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The tongue is a sacred instrument when men thus employ it to extol the greatness, love, and holiness of God. But they who use it both to bless God and curse men must be classed with hypocrites, or with the self-deceived.

To curse men as heretics, to consign them in the heart and by words to eternal condemnation, to persecute them to death, because their doctrinal tenets differ from our own, and yet pretend to do God service, or present to Him an acceptable offering ; what can be more hypocritical and abominable than this ? Jno. 16 : 2 ; Jas. 4 : 12 ; Rev. 18 : 24.

We should not curse men : for this is wholly unbecoming those who profess to be the children of God. We should not curse pious men, since God's image is renewed in them day by day. 2 Cor. 4 : 16. Not the unrenewed ; for we as well as they were once children of wrath, and they as descendants of Adam are not irreclaimable as the fallen angels, but have some faint outlines of the divine image, and a Redeemer provided for and offered to them ; they, too,

are capable of a gradual restoration to the original similitude, by receiving illumination and an upright disposition from the Holy Spirit through the Word of Truth. "Bless, and curse not."—Tit. 3 : 3-7 ; Heb. 2 : 16 ; Jno. 3 : 16.

Because this sin is not only inexcusable, but demon-like. Cursing is from hate, and that from hell : cf. vs. 14, 15. Because it is wholly contrary to the mind of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glorious One. He, even when nailed to the cross, prayed for His murderers, and died for His enemies.

It is a perfect moral absurdity to suppose that he can be religious who with the same mouth blesses God and curses men. *Doth a fountain*, etc. The inspired orator appeals to the conscience, through the imagination, with wonderful power. He reasons from what is impossible in nature to what is absurd in human conduct. (Estius and Manton.) Or as Calvin expresses it : He brings forward these analogies to show that an evil-speaking tongue is something monstrous, unlike any thing in nature, and that it overturns the order everywhere established by God. For He has so distinguished things which are contrary, that even lifeless things ought to deter us from such a confused disorder as there is in a double tongue.

Out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. How unnatural and shocking in men made in the likeness of God ! *Does a fountain out of the same opening send forth the sweet and the bitter ?* (Heb. 11 : 38, Gr.) That is a lifeless irrational thing, and yet it ever flows according to the law of its nature. And should not men act according to the law of their nature ? Does and can the conscience approve of such duplicity ? *Can a fig tree bear olives, or a vine figs ?* You know well that they produce fruit according to their kind ; the fig tree, figs ; the vine, grapes. "Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles ?" Can the heart of a renewed man be a spring overflowing with salt water and sweet, cursing and blessing ? Can this be according to the law of your nature, as God established it ?

A renewed heart is like a sweet and health-giving spring, and the words that well up from it are "words of grace;" or if there is any salt in such a heart and on such a tongue, it is that of prudence or wisdom. Col. 4 : 6. But the unrenewed soul is like a salt spring; and as bitter waters gush from such a fountain, so malignant words proceed from the lips of the irreligious. Mat. 12 : 34; Luke 6 : 45.

But does any likeness to God still remain in mankind generally? James takes it for granted; for he does not speak of cursing the first parents of mankind, but men then existing. Some blurred and dim outlines of the original likeness are visible in the moral nature of men. They not only distinguish in some degree between truth and falsehood, but also between right and wrong, and to some extent act as conscience dictates. Rom. 2 : 14, 15. The mainspring of the watch, indeed, often has an ugly twist in it, but it is not yet wholly broken. Conscience, then, as it works in men on earth, is a relic and proof of that supreme regard for moral rectitude which man had at his creation.

The obscure lineaments of the original similitude appear also in the dominion which men have and retain over the inferior creation. And more clearly, though with many imperfections, in the erection and upholding of political society, and in the administration of justice. Gen. 9 : 6. Ps. 82 : 1, 6.

The original likeness consisted not in the possession of an immortal spirit alone; for if so, then Satan and his angels would bear the image of God; but in the possession of an immortal spirit that was upright in all its faculties, and harmonious in all their operations. Eccl. 7 : 29; Eph. 4 : 24; Col. 3 : 10. Also in the possession of a spirit that had complete dominion over all the inferior creation, and held its own bodily members and appetites in perfect subjection to reason and conscience; thus reflecting in miniature not only something of the knowledge and holiness, but also something of the omnipotence, of God.

9. God even the Father, vg K L ; the Lord and Father, A B C S syr.
 12. So no fountain (can) yield salt water and sweet, K L Thph Oec ;
 Neither (can) salt water yield sweet, A B C ; having *oute* instead of *δutos*,
 which last is found in S vg. most of the versions. Although the varia-
 tions all amount to the same thing, yet the reading of A B C seems
 preferable. James does not continue his questions, but stops suddenly,
 as if he had expressed the negative answer required : Can a fig tree bear
 olives, or a vine figs? (Not at all.) Neither can salt water yield sweet.
 At least, we know of no better way of explaining the sudden change in
 the structure of the sentence. Salt water, by metonymy, for the fountain
 whence it flows.

¹³ Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among
 you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works
 with meekness of wisdom.

True and false religion further distinguished : the former
 manifesting itself in various forms of love ; the latter, in
 various forms of malignity, 13-18 vs.

Who is wise and knowing among you? Who supposes that
 he is eminently an intelligent Christian? *Let him show by a
 beautiful walk his works in meekness of wisdom.* A beautiful
walk, by substitution, for habitual virtuous behavior. *His
 works* ; the works characteristic of such a man, or the ac-
 tions that are peculiar to the eminently pious ; the works
 connected with or consisting in *meekness arising from wis-
 dom* or piety. Let him show it *by* this beautiful walk : lit.
out of, or *from* it, as the source or means of proof ; as in
 2 : 13, 21, 22. *Endued with knowledge*, is a beautiful meta-
 phor, but it is not in the Greek word, which is the same as
 knowing, prudent, learned or well-taught. The reference
 is not to teachers only, nor to a mere speculative and scien-
 tific knowledge of Christianity, but to those who are wise
 unto salvation ; ver. 17, opposed to those who glory and
 lie against the truth : ver. 14. Cf. 2 Tim. 3 : 15,

There can be no piety without knowledge. Jno. 17 : 3 ;
 Col. 3 : 10. But this is always mingled with love, and
meekness is a form of love. It is a mild, unrevengeful dis-

position, a readiness to forgive ; the opposite of bitter zeal, and self-seeking : ver. 14.

A wise and intelligent Christian walks in meekness. Amidst multiplied provocations, he remains calm and of a loving spirit, keeping down all revengeful feelings. What a beautiful contrast to the spirit of the implacable who "bite and devour one another !" In this path of the just we are bound by the highest authority and example to walk daily and steadily. Mat. 11 : 29.

He who is ever ready to harm those who have offended him, shows his works also. Satan is implacable ; he never forgives. And the same is true of those who graduate in his school. The diploma he gives them is a spirit of revenge. Jno. 8 : 41-44 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 12, 15.

To have an extensive and accurate knowledge of divine truth with corresponding obedience, and especially with meekness of wisdom, is exceedingly important. Jas. 1 : 19-25 ; Col. 1 : 9, 10. But it is not enough to be mere theologians. For some through cowardice keep back many revealed truths, doctrinal and practical ; others through pride go beyond the limits set by God's word, and put forth their own opinions as oracles. "Lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them ?" Jer. 8 : 9.

Knowledge without love puffeth up, but love to God and man combined with knowledge buildeth up. 1 Cor. 8 : 1. And wisdom or science so-called, without faith and love, is in God's eye learned folly. 1 Cor. 3 : 18-20. Even the demons are respectable theologians ; their knowledge is not only concerning God as one, and as truthful and just, 2 : 19 ; but also concerning Christ. Mark 1 : 23, 24, 34. Luke 4 : 41. But their knowledge is without a particle of love and meekness, and what does it profit them ? And how can a similar knowledge avail to the salvation of men ?

Epistemon, here only in N. T., but it is=*epistamenos*, as in 1 Tim. 6 : 4 ; Heb. 11 : 8. *Anastrophe*=a turning back or about, a walk ; hence, habitual behavior or conduct, which is the meaning of "conver-

sation " in the English Version. Meekness of wisdom : genitive of source or origin. The wisdom meant is described in ver. 17.

¹⁴ But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual [marg. natural.], devilish. ¹⁶ For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion [tumult, or unquietness] and every evil work.

A religion that is vain appears in these forms of malignity. *Envying*: lit. *zeal*, which is any fervent affection of the mind, or a passionate desire to attain some end. Accordingly it is used in a good sense, as in Jno. 2 : 17 ; 2 Cor. 7 : 7. Also, in a bad signification, to denote an ignorant misdirected zeal for the honor of God ; as in Rom. 10 : 2 ; Phil. 3 : 6. It is also used to denote *envy*, or rather *envious rage*, Acts 5 : 17 ; 13 : 45, arising from the same ignorant and misdirected zeal.

The zeal here meant is metaphorically described as *bitter*, *i.e.*, cruel and malignant, the zeal which leads to cursing, vs. 10, 11, and to murder, or persecution of supposed heretics even unto death : of the cognate verb, 4 : 2. It includes envy, 4 : 5, or envious rage ; indignation and mortification because of the spread of a hated religion. Zealots for ancestral traditions often become persecutors. Gal. 1 : 14, 23 ; Phil. 3 : 6 ; Acts 22 : 3, etc.

Strife: it is not *eris*, which means strife, but *eritheia* (derived from *erithos*, a hireling)=mercenary selfish ambition, or self-seeking. *Eritheia* (Eng. Vers. "strife") is distinguished from *eris* (Eng. Vers. "variance"), Gal. 5 : 20. The former word=self-seeking or ambition is explained by the term "vain-glory," Phil. 2 : 3. It is found elsewhere in Rom. 2 : 8 ; 2 Cor. 12 : 20 ; Phil. 1 : 16 ; Jas. 3 : 14, 16 (Eng. Vers. "strife" and "contention"). *But if ye have bitter zeal and ambition* (self-seeking) *in your heart*, if they are boiling up in your hearts as in a fountain, if ye hold and cherish them there, *do not glory and lie against the*

truth : boast not as if ye were vindicators of God's word of truth, nor deceive yourselves as to your relation to it. So ye dishonor that word, and prove that it is not ingrafted within you · cf. 1 : 20, 21.

Not this is the wisdom from above descending, but earthly, natural, demon-like. This bitter zeal and ambition are not that piety of which God is the author, 1 : 17, but if we must call such a disposition wisdom or religion, it is one of earthly origin, congenial only to unregenerated men (Jude, ver. 19 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 14), and like that which demons have.

For where zeal (the bitter zeal just mentioned) *and ambition are there is restlessness, and every evil work.* This mis-named wisdom or religion is earthly, natural, and demon-like, *for* restlessness, with every other sin connected with this zeal and self-seeking, ever follows in its train.

They who hold a bitter zeal and a mercenary ambition in their hearts, are never still or at rest ; never satisfied with the possession of honor and power already attained, but like uneasy fiends they run to and fro in search of more. Such do not regard the rights, feelings, opinions or settled convictions of others, if they stand in the way of their own promotion, or in the prosecution of their selfish ends, whether secular or professedly religious, but trample them down as the mire of the streets. And hence it is evident that everything done from the promptings of this zeal and self-seeking must partake of the foulness, or moral meanness of those passions.

A man of worldly ambition, caring nothing for any religion, cannot bear a rival. He pines away with envy, if another is more honored than himself, or is in the way to the highest official honors in a State : “ All this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.” And an ambitious fanatic is filled with envy, when he sees the prosperity of a religious system which he hates. Then he becomes restless, or active as a demon, and shrinks not from any malignant device or deed to crush what he hates. Acts 5 : 17, etc. ; 13 : 45.

Bitter zeal and self-seeking cannot exist without envy, which is a strange sickness of the heart at the sight of another's prosperity, or superiority. Cain's countenance fell because God accepted his brother's offering, and disregarded his own ; the first death in our world being occasioned by commingled zeal, envy and ambition in a heart unrenewed.

And why did some of the Judaizers preach Christ? Out of an envious and contentious spirit, and from the impulse of a mercenary ambition, thinking to add affliction to Paul's bonds. Phil. 1 : 15, 16.

Envy arising from bitter zeal also takes a demon-like triumph in the disgrace and anguish of the envied. Hence the leading men among the Jews insisted on Pilate's condemning our Lord. Mat. 27 : 18. And did they not exult in His sufferings, mocking Him even on the cross?

But is there any wisdom in bitter zeal, envy and self-seeking? Can these or any modifications of hatred constitute the essence of religion? Ye who hold these things in your heart are as pious as the demons! They are wise to do evil ; their envy and ambition indeed exceed yours, but there is a likeness between their passions and your own. How absurd and monstrous it is for you, or for any, to glory in a demon-like religion !

Let this bitter zeal and selfish ambition be let loose in any congregation of professed disciples, and then what shall we see? Too many of the avowed friends of the meek and lowly Jesus exhibiting the disposition of demons ; confusion and every evil work, arising from the ceaseless efforts of those who carry into the house of God live coals from hell. Surely, they are wise and knowing who walk in love, and in the meekness of wisdom. ,

14. Do not glory and lie against the truth, B syr vg ; S has (omitting *kata* before the noun), Do not glory in respect of the truth and lie.

15. To render *psuchike* by *sensual* or *animal*, does not give the full or exact meaning. We have no word in English of the same comprehensive signification ; but here the marginal translation, *natural*, is the nearest equivalent, as is evident from the texts above referred to ; it is

the wisdom embraced by unrenewed men, manifested by bitter zeal and selfish ambition, by envy and vain-glory ; which are not sins belonging to the external senses, or animal-like. *Devilish* should be *demon-like* : cf. notes on 2 : 19. Pride, ambition, and envy originating from a malignant and cruel zeal, are their great and prevailing sins.

16. Eng. Vers. has three words for *akatastasia*—"confusion," "tumult," and "unquietness ;" of which the last is here the best ; cf. the cognate adjective, 1 : 8. Lit. it is=instability, incapability of standing, or remaining fixed in one position ; hence *restlessness*, ceaseless changing efforts to attain an end ; from which result *confusion*, tumult or wild disorder : found elsewhere only in Luke 21 : 9 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 33 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 5 ; 12 : 20.

¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure ; then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality [marg. without wrangling], and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

The wisdom or righteousness of which God is the author manifests itself in these various forms of love. It is *first pure*, or *chaste*. He is truly religious who is not defiled with a supreme or adulterous attachment to the world, but fixes his chaste heart on God, or loves Him supremely. In that wisdom which consists in the fear of God, the highest reverence mingled with adoring love, this heart-chastity is first in importance and excellence : cf. 4 : 4, 8.

Then (or *after that* as to men and in the particulars that follow) *peaceable*, or *pacific* : averse from contention on trifling matters, and on subjects not revealed in Holy Scripture ; not growling like a fierce and rabid dog, but ever disposed to quell the fury of an enraged spirit.

Gentle, mild or forbearing : throwing the mantle of love over a brother's faults ; the heart welling up with kindness, not boiling with ill will.

Easy to be entreated : readily listening to kind motives and admonitions ; easily persuaded to do good to others, and dissuaded from doing them evil ; ever ready to receive a reasonable excuse ; not stiff or obstinate in the execution of malicious feelings and intentions. Such feelings and inten-

tions may at times flash through a wise man's heart, but they rest only in the bosom of a fool. Eccl. 7 : 8. The pious are placable ; the impious, implacable.

Full of mercy and good fruits : like a fountain filled with sweet and refreshing water, and a tree laden with choice ripe fruit ; ever disposed from a loving sympathizing heart to soothe the sorrows and supply the wants of the needy and afflicted. 1 : 27 ; 2 : 15, 16.

Without partiality : 2 : 1-13. *Without hypocrisy,* or rather (since the reference is to men) *without dissimulation,* as the word is translated, Rom. 12 : 9 ; in all respects sincere, or feigned in love to others.

This is the wisdom from above ; such are the effects of true religion. Are we the possessors of it ? How powerful and blessed would the influence of professed disciples be, if one and all truly exhibited these virtues !

The gracious reward of this wisdom : *And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.* So our translators, understanding the verse thus : Righteousness is sown in a peaceable manner by those who cultivate peace, and so it produces its fruit, or proper effects. By this interpretation, which gives a good sense, it is taken for granted that righteousness is sown by the wise or pious ; that "in peace" is indicative of manner ; and that the dative, as in 3 : 7, is the dative of the agent, denoted by "of," or by. In this way the laborers in God's vineyard are described, the quiet or peaceable manner of their working, and the fruit or good result of their righteous behavior as it appears in the present sanctification of men.

We understand the original thus : *But the fruit of righteousness consisting in peace is sown for them that make peace :* which is equally agreeable to usage. *In peace* = in a state of perfect blessedness, or in complete bliss ; as in 2 Pet. 3 : 14. *For* (dative of advantage) the peacemakers. *Is sown, i.e.* by God. *Fruit is sown,* by substitution, for the plentiful reward, gracious result, or harvest of glory prepared by God. It is like fruit all ripe in the hands of God

(" ready to be revealed at the last time," 1 Pet. 1 : 5), but to us as yet in many particulars hidden or dimly seen, like seed sown or scattered on the loose soil. The fruit proceeding from righteousness is all ready to be given by God ; that fruit consists in peace ; and they who shall partake of it are the chaste in heart, the loving, the merciful, and the peacemakers. Mat. 5 : 7-9. James seems also to allude to Ps. 97 : 11.

" Light is sown for the righteous,
And for the upright in heart gladness."

The motive here presented for the cultivation of pure and undefiled religion is very enlivening. Cheer up, ye lovers and promoters of the wisdom from above, for the fruit of your righteous labors in a state of perfect blessedness shall speedily be given you ; and what you do not understand about it now, you shall know then. 5 : 7, 8 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 2, 3.

17. *Adiakritos* : not " without wrangling," for that is included in *peaceable* ; not that in which there is nothing doubtful or ambiguous = faithful or sincere, for that is expressed by *without dissimulation* ; but *without partiality*, or *not separated* from others by respect of persons : cf. 2 : 4, Gr.

18. If *tois poiouein* be taken as the dative of advantage, as in the Dutch N. T., then our interpretation is preferable to the common one. That it is natural and unforced is evident from 2 Pet. 3 : 14 ; Ps. 97 : 11 ; Jas. 5 : 7, 8. *In peace* : *en* = consisting in ; as in Col. 1 : 12 ; 2 : 11. " For our part of the inheritance of the saints *consisting in light*." " A circumcision *consisting in the putting off*," etc. The position of the phrase in the Greek also shows that it is a further description of what is meant by " the fruit of righteousness." By disregarding the order of the original, and translating " is sown in peace," the meaning, if not wholly misunderstood, is greatly obscured. " The fruit of righteousness consisting in peace is sown for them that make peace," is a literal translation, and exhibits the thought in its simplicity and beauty. Otherwise rendered, the sense must ever be somewhat doubtful and ambiguous.

CHAPTERS IV. AND V., 1-6.

Synopsis of Contents.

SECOND part of the Epistle. Exhortations addressed to non-professors, to those still clinging to Judaism, and wholly under the sway of their own evil passions.

1. True religion is wholly inconsistent with a seditious, fanatically zealous and murderous spirit, and with supreme love to the world. 4 : 1-6.

2. An earnest call to repentance or conversion. 7-10.

3. Detraction of every kind inconsistent with regard for the moral law, and its Great Author. 11-12.

4. A pungent admonition to those who are determined to become rich. 13-17.

5. Judgments denounced on various classes of the impious rich. 5 : 1-6.

¹ From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come* they not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members? ² Ye lust, and have not : ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain : ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. ³ Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.

Whence wars and battles among you? Come they not hence, from your lusts that war in your members? The second question is an answer to the first. There are wars and battles among you : ye have a seditious spirit, as is evident from this disorderly and armed opposition to the civil powers. These wars and battles certainly originate from your lusts that *war*, or like soldiers in active service contend for the mastery, *in and by your bodily members* ; these members being to them as arms and a battle field—a

bold but lucid metaphor. *Lusts* : lit. *pleasures* ; a metonymy of the object for the internal proximate cause ; pleasures, or things lusted for, used for the lusts themselves.

James, in this chapter, and in the beginning of the next, addresses those of the dispersed tribes who glory and lie against the truth, who have bitter zeal and selfish ambition in their hearts, and whose religion is earthly, natural, and demon-like : 3 : 14, 15 ; those who murder and are zealous, and are like adulteresses, utter apostates from God, 4 : 2, 4 ; who are envious, and unconverted, with filthy hands and unchaste hearts, 4 : 5-10.

Wars and battles are natural to such men. In millions of instances they have taken the law in their own hands, and dealt out revenge, misnaming it justice.

Besides, the Israelites of the dispersion, as well as those in Palestine, were disposed not only to religious disputes, but also to sedition and revolutions. The words before us are an unexceptionable proof of it. And the ambitious among them, to gain their own nefarious ends, perverted and abused the doctrine of the theocracy, or God's peculiar government of their nation ; even when wrath was coming on them to completion. 1 Thes. 2 : 16. (How the zealots acted before and at the destruction of Jerusalem, may be seen in Josephus.)

The common explanation of " wars and battles," as=disputes and quarrels, cannot be justified ; since in the question there are two propositions ; wars and battles are among you ; whence do they originate ? It thus appears that " wars and battles " are the subjects of the proposition ; but a metaphor lies only and wholly in the predicate, never in the subject, or nominative.

Ye lust, and have not : the thing desired is not here expressed ; its fruitlessness only is declared. Hence some explain it of the getting of riches, honor, and power, or the indulgence of the bodily appetites in profligate living ; all which, according to the temperament and disposition of the unrenewed, are the objects of their intense desire. We hold

that the thing especially desired is intimated in the question preceding : Whence are wars and battles among you ? Ye lust for earthly power, or the dominion over the Gentiles, and yet ye have it not. Your wars and fightings flow from this lust of power and dominion. Ye have an irrepressible longing to put the sceptre in your own hands, and by your own military power ; and yet it eludes your grasp. This interpretation is confirmed from the fact that James is speaking to those who have bitter zeal and ambition in their hearts. Here their lust of power, or selfish ambition, is especially reproved ; in the next clause, their bitter zeal against Christians : Lit. *Ye kill* (or *commit murder* ; as in 2 : 11 ; 5 : 6) *and are zealous*, 3 : 14, *and yet ye cannot obtain*. Ye murder innocent Christians, or persecute them unto death, and that because you are zealous, or have a malignant and cruel zeal for the honor of God and the spread of Judaism ; but ye cannot obtain your heart's desire, 'the extinction of the hated Christian religion : cf. 1 Thes. 2 : 15, 16. *Ye fight and war*. Not only do ye lust after dominion over the Gentiles, not only do ye murder from a bitter zeal the disciples of Christ ; but while I am writing to you ye are actually engaged in armed opposition to and rebellion against the civil powers. Are treason and murder characteristics of true religion ? Can you suppose that, even in your wildest dreams ?

The climax should be noticed : *Ye lust, ye kill and are zealous, ye fight and war ; but all to no purpose*, since vain are all your efforts to restore what you call the theocracy, or to uproot Christianity.

A period should be put after " war " : " Ye lust and have not : ye kill and are zealous, but ye cannot obtain : ye fight and war." It would be better to begin a new paragraph with what follows : *Ye have not, because ye ask not* ; your desires are not gratified, because you are prayerless. The reference is to worldly goods or riches, as is evident from the next verse : *Ye ask and receive not*, Mat. 7 : 7, 8, *because ye ask wickedly*, with an evil intention, *that ye may con-*

sume it upon your lusts, or spend the wealth acquired in the indulgence of sinful pleasures.

Men of towering selfish ambition and of fanatical zeal are comparatively few, but they who are desirous of wealth appear in crowds ; and if they desire to spend it in various sinful pleasures, their prayers for it must be an abomination to the Holy God. Hence He often overturns in His providence the plans of the most sagacious. They look for much, but it comes to little ; putting their golden eagles into a purse with holes. Deut. 8 : 17, 18 ; Hag. 1 : 6, 9.

Wars and battles arise from the bad passions of men : such as a desire for military glory ; a panting for a more extensive territory or realm ; from revenge, or a desire to cripple and destroy the power and greatness of an enemy, on account of some insult, real or supposed ; and even from a fanatical zeal for the so-called glory of God, or from the poisoned fountain of an earthly, natural, and demon-like religion. And from what but the last-named source have persecutions and exterminating crusades originated ? Heretics, so called, like sheep destined for slaughter, murdered by thousands and millions, in the name of God, and by men calling themselves religious ! So we “ view man’s heart, and see the hell that’s there.”

Defensive wars, indeed, are sometimes necessary ; either to preserve the existence of a nation, or to maintain and perpetuate the civil and religious rights of the people ; but even such wars flow from the lusts that rage in those who are no friends to civil or religious liberty.

The present state of mankind gives no satisfactory evidence that wars are about to cease. Nations, for nearly six thousand years, have attempted to settle their disputes in this terrible way, and still the fires of hate and passion are not quenched. These melancholy facts in the history of our race should lead us to long and pray for the appearance of Him who is to put an end to wars and battles among mankind. Isa. 2 ; Mic. 4.

Neither is there any evidence in Scriptural prophecy that the adherents of a false and demoniacal religion are to lose their malignant passions, and cease to persecute the holy ; but the contrary. Rev. 17.

An excessive fondness for human traditions, put on a level with the Word of God, together with an ill-trained conscience and misdirected zeal, these make a persecutor. So it was with Saul of Tarsus, and with many before and since his day. Phil. 3 : 6 ; Gal. 1 : 13, 14 ; Acts 22 : 1-4. But persecution unto death on account of religious belief James calls murder, and the zeal which leads to it bitter, that is, cruel and malignant.

We pray wickedly, when we ask for anything forbidden, or not promised by God ; also, when we ask from some evil motive, or intention : cf. 1 Jno. 5 : 14 ; Ps. 66 : 18.

1. A. Whence wars among you, and whence battles ? B C S cop Thph, Whence wars and whence battles among you ? K L vg, syr Oec, as the common text.

2. *Yet* ye have not ; not supported by the uncial manuscripts. And ye have not, S vg cop syr Thph Oec ; Ye have not, A B K L, which we prefer.

Strateuomai, to be in active service ; act as soldiers. *Phoneuete kai zêloutê*=ye commit murder and are zealous ; the reference is not simply to deadly zeal, and envy arising from it, but the first verb describes the act ; the second, the motive leading to it : Ye kill, and so show your zeal.

⁴ Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God ? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. ⁵ Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy ? ⁶ But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

True religion is wholly incompatible with supreme love to the world, envy, and pride.

Ye adulteresses (now generally received as the genuine reading)=ye who are adulteresses ; an elliptical metaphor, and the sense is : Ye who are like them, having given your-

selves and your affections to the world ; your hearts wholly estranged from God. (The prophets often speak of apostasy from God as adultery.) Ye boast, indeed, of being in covenant with God, but that covenant ye have broken. *Know ye not that love to the world is enmity to God?* Are ye ignorant of the fact that supreme attachment to wicked men and pleasures is a clear indication of enmity to God? To love the world supremely, more than God and instead of Him, is spiritual adultery, or apostasy from the true object of our highest love. *Whoever then will be a lover of the world, he stands as an enemy of God :* since there can be but one supreme object of love, a lover of the world conspicuously appears as an adversary of God. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." *Do ye think that the Scripture saith it in vain?* (It must be supplied, to make the sense more obvious.) The allusion is to the general doctrine of Scripture as stated in the verse immediately preceding : Do ye suppose that the Scripture means nothing or speaks falsely, when it so often describes supreme love to the world as spiritual adultery and enmity to God?

Towards envy longeth the Spirit which he caused to dwell within us? God gave His Spirit to dwell *in us* at our regeneration, 1 : 18, and can that Spirit be the author and promoter of envy ; of envy arising from bitter zeal and selfish ambition, and from supreme love to the world? vs. 1-3 ; 3 ; 14-16. That Spirit, therefore, cannot dwell *in you*, ye adulteresses. Other explanations are noticed below.)

The Spirit has no envious longings ; He is not therefore the inciter and promoter of envy : *But he giveth greater grace*, or a greater favor, *i.e.*, the meekness of wisdom and humility, or a lowly, loving and forgiving spirit, in all respects superior to pride and envy. *Wherefore he saith, i.e.*, the Spirit by the pen of Solomon, Prov. 3 : 34, *God arrayeth himself against the proud, but he giveth grace unto the lowly :* *i.e.*, God is the enemy of the proud, the arrogant, or insolently irreverent, but the friend of the lowly. Against the

one class He marshals the forces of His omnipotence ; on the other He constantly bestows tokens of His favor.

The Great Author of Scripture never trifles. He means what He says. And we should never trifle with any truth revealed by Him, and unquestionably not with that which relates to the first and great commandment of the moral law, and the second which is like unto it. 2 : 8.

If we thrust God out of our hearts, and put there anything else as the supreme object of our love, no matter what, instead of Him ; then we forsake the true husband of the soul, and are guilty of spiritual adultery, or idolatry. But no idolater hath any part in the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him. 1 : 12 ; 2 : 5.

The meek and lowly may be despised by men, but they are loved by God. His favor, like the rain, runs down from the high steep rocks where live the envious and proud, into the valley of meekness and humility, where the pious dwell.

What an enemy is God ? If He be against us, who can be for us ? What a friend is God ! If He be for us, who can be against us ?

4. A B S ye adulteresses ; vg cop syr ye adulterers ; K L Thph Oec as c. t. The last reading probably originated from a transcriber's taking adulteresses literally. The first reading is every way preferable ; every difficulty in the exegesis being removed, as soon as the elliptical metaphor is discerned. The friendship, or "*love of the world*," and "*enmity of God*," are genitives of the object. "*Enmity*," by metonymy, for the sign or outward indication of it. "Whoever then will be a friend of the world," is desirous of so being, or chooses to be so, "he stands," lit. sets himself down, as "an enemy of God." Or, if it be taken as passive, then it is= is set down (by his own choice and volition) or so constituted an enemy of God. We prefer the former mode of explanation. 5. This verse has been put on the interpreter's rack, and many forced interpretations wrung from it : see Poli Synopsis and Lange. As to the text, we hold *katokisen*=he caused to dwell, supported by A B S, to be the genuine reading : *katokesen* is=dwelt. It is a variation per itacismum. The interpretation above given is, in the main, that of Calvin. The sense elicited by it is in harmony with the preceding context, and conformed to the scope of the writer in that context. The explanation of the English Version is objectionable. It translates the aorist or past

tense by the present, "dwelleth", which, if ever allowable, is certainly not so in a "vexed passage," like the present one. They who make *envy* and *jealousy* (as Alford and others) the same thing, only scatter darkness on what is in itself lucid : *Doth* the Spirit *long* towards envy ? a metaphor. Is there anything in "the Spirit of Grace" like an intense desire towards envy ? Can He who produces in us love to God and men have envious longings ? See Sept. Ps. 41 : 1 (E. V. 42).

Which he *caused to dwell in us* : another metaphor=gave to rule over and control us, like a loving master in his own house, or home.

The only accurate translation of *meizona charin* is *greater grace*, or *a greater favor*, not "more grace" : the reference is not, as Calvin supposes, to the abundance of the Spirit's gifts, but to their excellency or superiority, the righteous being more excellent than the unrenewed, in consequence of the Spirit's indwelling : cf. Heb. 11 : 26, "greater riches."

Katokesen is elsewhere correctly rendered *dwelt*, as in Mat. 2 : 23 ; 4 : 13 ; Acts 7 : 2, 4. But if it be taken here in a hiphil or causative signification, then it agrees in meaning with the other reading : cf. Mat. 28 : 19 ; Acts 14 : 21 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 14. For the c. t. K L vg cōp syr Thph Oec.

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners ; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double-minded. ⁹ Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep : let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Here those previously described, 4 : 1-6, are earnestly called to repentance and conversion. *Submit yourselves to God*, perfectly obey Him : or, if there is an allusion to the primary signification of the verb, then we should render : *Arrange yourselves under God* ; enlist in His army, and obey His orders. Let your rebellion against Him instantly cease : cf. 1 Pet. 2 : 13 ; 3 : 21 ; 5 : 5. Gr., *Therefore : i.e.*, because He is the enemy of the proud, and of all the adulterous lovers of the world.

Resist the devil ; withstand, or stand against him, as a brave soldier opposes his enemy in battle, and especially in a hand-to-hand conflict. Eph. 6 : 12. Or, as Paul expresses it, "Give no place to the devil," Eph. 4 : 27 ; in

contending with him, do not yield an inch. *And he shall flee from you :* and then you have God's promise that you will conquer, your enemy fleeing in disgrace. The greatest sinners are the greatest cowards—the devil himself not excepted, for cunning is not bravery.

Draw nigh to God : approach Him by prayer, or entreat His help in resisting the devil, *and He will draw nigh to you*, stand by you as your strength-giver and protector. In this contest trust in God and express your faith by prayer ; go to Him as a friend, and He will compass you with His shield. (Drawing nigh to God, by substitution, for confidence in and prayer to Him : God's drawing nigh to you, for His loving omnipotent energy shown in your behalf.)

Cleanse your hands : by substitution for Abstain from all external sinful deeds, such as those named in vs. 1, 2. Cf. Isa. 1 : 15, 16. *Ye sinners*, emphatically so called, as in Mat. 9 : 10, 11, 13. *And purify your hearts*, or, *make your hearts chaste* ; alluding to the fourth verse, where they are called adulteresses : cf. 3 : 17. The sense is : Put your affections supremely on God alone. *Ye double-minded*, ye who vainly attempt to serve both God and the world : cf. 1 : 8.

Moan, audibly confess and lament your want of love to God, and other sins proceeding from it ; or acknowledge to Him your miserable condition in this particular : *and mourn*, *and weep* on that account, like those lamenting over the dead. Cherish the sincerest sorrow that you have defiled your hearts with contemptible idols, worshipped and served them, passing by the Creator. *Let your laughter*, etc. Let your former delight in sin cease, and cultivate sorrow, shame, and self-loathing on account of it. *Heaviness*, lit. *a down-cast countenance* ; a natural indication of sorrow, shame, and self-loathing, arising from a consciousness of the ill-desert and guilt of sin : a metonymy of the sign for the thing signified.

Take a low place before the Lord ; by substitution for, Beg humbly for mercy. Fall down before the Lord, the

Lawgiver and Judge, and as criminals acknowledge His justice, while praying for the exercise of His mercy. *And he shall lift you up*: another substitution=and then he will forgive you; lift you up from your prostrate position as criminals, or deliver you from condemnation: cf. Ps. 130: 3, 4. A promise of forgiveness to the penitent, naturally and happily concludes this earnest call to repentance, or turning from sin to God.

Perfect obedience to God is the duty of every sinner; for man's rebellion cannot, and does not, overthrow God's rightful authority, law, and moral government. Accordingly, James here calls upon the vilest sinners to enter God's army, and obey without questioning His orders. To serve Him is the highest freedom. This cannot be done without resisting the devil; opposing him in all his assaults however violent, and giving no heed to his lying suggestions and cunning stratagems.

To conquer this enemy, we must approach God with unwavering faith and prayer.

True repentance springs from a heart chaste towards God; an unfeigned sorrow for sin arising from love to Him. Its first effects are abstinence from gross transgressions, and renunciation of the world as the chief good, with an humble confession of ill-desert and guilt, and prayers for mercy. To such God promises forgiveness. The legal ground or reason of such forgiveness on God's part, is stated by other sacred writers. Rom. 3: 24-26; 2 Cor. 5: 21; 1 Pet. 2: 24; Rev. 1: 5.

Hints as to the temptations of the devil, and the right mode of withstanding him. Satan and his angels adapt their temptations to the peculiar temperament and disposition of men, as well as to their peculiar circumstances.

To a convinced sinner who begins to avoid former evil companions, they whisper thus: To obey God is certainly right, but do not give way to such distress. Can such a virtuous person as you are belong to the devil's army? But when this stratagem does not avail to lead such back to

their former heedlessness, then they suggest that it is too late to obtain mercy. The temptation to despair of God's mercy in Christ, is as dangerous as the temptation to presumption : and we should not be ignorant of Satan's devices.

The great mass of mankind are tempted to make a god of their bodily appetites ; with their own consent, they are drowned in brutal sensual enjoyments.

Men of finer intellectual mould are more commonly flattered with the lust of fame and power ; the devil enthroning them as gods, to whom incense or blood must be offered.

To the young and inexperienced Satan presents a photograph of the world as a paradise of beauty and joy ; persuading them to enjoy to the full all youthful lusts, and that it will be time enough to turn to God when they become older ; and how few turn away from the lying picture, or ask themselves whether God will, should, or can, accept such an offering at their hands.

And, strange to say, as the sands of time are running out, he tempts the aged to become more and more avaricious, selfish, and forgetful of God ; grasping their gold with the death rattle in their throats.

But how must we resist him ? By faith and prayer : cf. 1 Pet. 5 : 9. With confidence in God's promise of victory, hope will dilate the heart, and strengthen the arms of the soul. We must also "be sober" ; not drunk with the wine of the world, not stupefied or maddened with a longing after sinful pleasures. A drunken soldier is soon overpowered. We must "keep awake," or be vigilant ; use all our faculties to good purposes ; honestly and carefully test motives and suggestions, and so shun his wiles. 1 Pet. 5 : 8. In a word, we must take up and use as the occasion requires the panoply which God has provided for all who enlist in His army. Eph. 6 : 11-19.

If any ask, How can we, with our sinful dispositions, submit ourselves to God, resist the devil, and truly repent ? we answer : It can be easily and thoroughly done, if God causes the Spirit to dwell within you. And since Christ

has, in the clearest and most encouraging way, promised the Holy Spirit to them that ask ; if you will not do so, then you will to all eternity be perfectly inexcusable. Luke 11 : 13.

¹¹ Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law : but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. ¹² There is one law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy : who art thou that judgest another ?

Detraction and harsh judgment of every kind inconsistent with regard for the moral law, and its Great Author. The unconverted Israelites were exceedingly censorious ; quick in judging others, and especially those of their own nation who had embraced the Gospel : and this great sin is here pungently reproved, James clearly showing that there can be no reverence for God while we trample His law under our feet, and seat ourselves on His tribunal.

Lit. *Speak not against one another, brothers : i.e., brother Israelites. To judge a brother, is to condemn him rashly and uncharitably. Mat. 7 : 1-5. To judge the law, is to condemn it as imperfect ; not by words, but by deeds, which speak louder than words. But if thou judgest the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge : by condemning the law, thou art in thine own estimation no longer a subject bound to obey, but a self-appointed sovereign ruler. Thus thou dost disregard the immutable obligations that bind thee to obey God ; dost insanely make thyself a law-maker instead of a law-doer, acting not like a man, but practically deifying thyself. That this is the right explanation, is evident from what follows : There is one lawgiver and judge, who is able to save and to destroy ; but who art thou that judgest thy neighbor ?* (So the text appears in the oldest manuscripts and versions.) There is but One whose prerogative it is to enact laws for the intelligent universe, and who is competent to discern infallibly the character of men, and decide on their everlasting destiny ; but as for thee, poor

sinful man, what unspeakable insolence is it for thee to act as if thou hadst supreme lordship and authority !

Every kind of evil speaking is here prohibited : everything that is spoken against, or to the injury of others ; whatever tends to lessen a neighbor's reputation or influence, and especially all rash and uncharitable judgments ; whether such words and judgments proceed from envy, or any other malignant passion, or from heedlessness. " Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself : I am Jehovah." Lev. 19 : 16, 18. " Judge not, that ye be not judged."

The prohibition in its spirit applies to authors, as well as talkers ; to words written and printed, as well as spoken.

How powerful are the motives ! This evil speaking and judging is a virtual condemnation of that law which is holy, just, and good : a practical declaration that it is not right to love our neighbor as ourselves !

Such a condemnation of the law is a condemnation of the One lawgiver and judge Himself ; an usurpation of the throne and rights of God, a practical assumption that it is our province, not His, to judge men !

Some say, How can we stop the tongues of evil speakers ? We answer, By obeying the prohibition before us. 1. *Never join in condemning any one blindly, i.e., with little or no knowledge of the facts in the case ; which is a rash and uncharitable judgment.* 2. *When slanderers begin to speak against any in your presence, refuse to hear them until the slandered are called in to defend themselves.* " The north wind bringeth forth a shower ; and an angry countenance (should be shown) to a backbiting tongue." Prov. 25 : 23, marg.

Deists and Rationalists, properly so called, speak against and condemn the whole Scripture, considered as a revelation from God, and affirm that their own reason is an all-sufficient rule in all matters of faith and duty. Papists indirectly accuse it as an uncertain and imperfect rule in

these matters, or think it necessary to supplement its supposed deficiencies with their own traditions ; “ teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,” like the Pharisees and false teachers of the apostolic age. (Mat. 15 : 9 ; Col. 2 : 20-23.)

And the late Vatican Council has declared that the pope, for the time being, when he speaks *ex cathedra* concerning faith and morals, is infallible. What an attempt to lift an erring sinful mortal into the place of the One lawgiver and judge ! What a disregard for the many lessons taught by ecclesiastical history, daily experience and observation ! What a disobedience to Christ, who has pointedly condemned this very thing ! Mat. 23 : 8-10.

11. K L Oec, and judgeth his brother ; A B S syr cop vg Thph, Or judgeth his brother. 12. A B S syr cop sah vg Did, There is one lawgiver and judge, but, etc. ; K L Oec, There is one lawgiver.

¹³ Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain : ¹⁴ whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life ? [marg. or, *for it is.*] It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. ¹⁵ For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. ¹⁶ But now ye rejoyce in your boastings : all such rejoycing is evil. ¹⁷ Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

Admonitions addressed to those who are determined to become rich : cf. 4 : 3, and who depend only on their own sagacity and energy to obtain the end desired. *Go to now, or come now* ; a phrase used for exciting the attention : listen, ye who speak as follows : *To-day or to-morrow we will go to this city, Alexandria, Damascus, Antioch or Rome, pointing as it were to the nearest one, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain ; ye who know not the event of the morrow !* But is God dead ? Or has He nothing to do with the continuance of your life, the preservation of your intel-

lect, and the removal of many perplexing difficulties that attend the acquisition of wealth? Ye appear and disappear on earth like a vapor, and yet you confidently expect to continue until you can count your thousands and millions, presumptuous, irreverent man!

Instead of your saying—whereas ye ought to say; alluding to ver. 13: *If the Lord will and we shall live, then we will do this or that.* The only right way is to regard the will of Him who is the author of life and of temporal prosperity; to be humble and reverent, while honest and industrious. Deut. 8 : 17, 18. *But now*, as the case really is, cf. 1 Cor. 12 : 18, *ye exult in your boastings*, in your vain-glorious, irreverent plans and devices. Ye anticipate the success of your schemes, with no misgivings; ye feel and act as if your fingers held and directed the wheels of Providence. *All such exultation is evil*, or eminently sinful.

James concludes this topic by replying to a latent objection: You tell us in an eloquent way that life is short, and that God's providence governs all things. But we need no apostle or evangelist to tell us that. James answers: *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin*: while you persist in sinning, your knowledge only adds to the guilt of your transgressions. As our Lord said: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Jno. 13 : 17.

"Labor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom." Prov. 23 : 4. But they that will be rich, whether by fair means or foul, pierce themselves through with many sorrows, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 1 Tim. 6 : 9, 10.

13. To-day and to-morrow A K L, Thph Oec; B S syr cop sah vg as the c. t. 14. *Hoitines*=*ye who*, with an implied reference to a cause; since ye are persons that know not what a day may bring forth. S, What your life, that for a little time, etc.; B, What your life? for ye are

a vapor, etc. ; syr vg, as the c. t., which we prefer. In c. t. the second *gar* is intensive : It is indeed a vapor, etc. ; very like an exhalation that appears for a moment, and then is gone. 15. The verse as above translated is supported by A B S : the second *kai* introduces the apodosis ; in our idiom=then, or : If the Lord will, and we shall live, we also will do this or that.

CHAPTER V.

Judgments denounced on various classes of the impious rich : 1-6. Conclusion of the second part of the epistle.

The third part of the epistle : concluding exhortations addressed to professed believers. 7-20.

1. Wait patiently for the coming of the Lord, and establish your hearts as to that coming.
2. Groan not against your brethren.
3. Imitate the prophets in patient waiting, while suffering evil from the hands of men.
4. Abstain from all irreverence towards God.
5. Adapt your devotions to your circumstances ; and forget not the efficacy of fervent prayer.
6. Strive to bring back the wanderer.

¹ Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*. ² Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and silver is cankered ; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. ⁴ Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth : and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. ⁵ Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton ; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. ⁶ Ye have condemned *and* killed the just ; *and* he doth not resist you.

The persons addressed are the ungodly rich, as is evident from the whole description. Their punishment is first declared : Come now, *ye* rich, *weep, howling over your miseries that are coming on*. By commanding them to weep and

wail at the bare prospect of the storm of the divine indignation, he shows how great and awful will be their helpless agony and excruciating remorse, when it is poured forth. *Miseries*, or *moanings*, by metonymy for the judgments that occasion them. *That are coming on*; or which will soon come, and one upon another, or in a perpetual series : cf. Luke 21 : 26 ; Eph. 2 : 7. (Acts 13 : 40, 41.)

The justice of this their punishment is next shown.

1. Because ye are miserly and uncharitable : *Your riches are corrupted*; or, *Your wealth has putrefied*. If literally taken, the reference is to fruit and grain of various kinds ; and this seems to be correct, for James distinguishes it from wealth consisting in garments, gold and silver. Your cellars and granaries are indeed filled ; yet you help not the distressed, but let your goods spoil and rot rather than minister to their wants. *Your garments have become moth-eaten* : allowed to decay and become useless ; not given, when whole and sound, to cover the shivering poor that ye always have with you, and whose hearts are not cheered by your well doing. Mk. 14 : 7. *Your gold and silver is cankered*; lit. *is rusted*. There is a metaphor in the verb, and the sense is : They have become dim, like the baser metals that are liable to rust. Lam. 4 : 1. Long have your gold and silver pieces been stored away : they would have been bright from use, if put into the hands of the needy. *And the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you*; like unexceptionable evidence, demonstrating your miserly and uncharitable disposition, the greatness of your sin, and the justice of your punishment. *And shall eat your flesh as fire* : a metaphor and a simile. As fire painfully consumes the bodies of living men, so will the recollection of unused wealth torment you. *Ye laid up treasure* (or *ye hoarded up*) *in the last days* : ye stored away your wealth for purely selfish purposes, and this in the last days ; which seems to mean, in the present Christian dispensation, the last period of God's forbearance with the incorrigible.

2. Weep, wailing over your miseries that are coming on ;

for ye are fraudulent and extortioners : *Behold*, put the mind's eye on what follows : *the hire of the laborers who harvested your fields, that is fraudulently kept back by you, crieth ; and the cries of the reapers into the ears of the Lord of Hosts have entered.*

Fields, by metonymy, for their products. *By you*, lit. *from you* : the wages either in whole or in part withheld, and that by influences or orders proceeding from you : see on 1 : 13. The hire *crieth* : it is a personification. So Abel's blood had a voice, and cried unto God from the ground. James seems to allude to Deut. 24 : 14, 15. Cf. Job 31 : 38. *The cries of the reapers*, their cries for help and justice, *have entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts* ; which is a substitution to denote His omniscience, or the absolute perfection of His knowledge. Not a groan bursts forth, nor is a cry uttered by an oppressed laborer, but He instantly hears it. The Omniscient is also the Almighty, under whom the universe, with all it contains, is arranged like well-ordered armies ; He who has infinite resources to effect what He threatens in His law and by His servants ; the omnipotent Sin-hater who will not be mocked, as well as the Omniscient who cannot be deceived.

Men, drest in a little brief authority, may grind the faces of the poor, and defraud the helpless ; and they may fancy that the oppressed have no avenger ; but He that is higher than the highest, the omniscient just God is their avenger. And what shelter or relief can vile extortioners and oppressors look for in the great day ! 1 Cor. 6 : 10 ; Jas. 2 : 13.

3. The justice of your punishment can not be disputed, for ye are luxurious, licentious, and sensual. *Ye lived luxuriously*, devoting yourselves to dainty food, choice wine, and gay clothing : living to eat, and drink, and dress : Lk. 7 : 25 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 13, Gr. And that *on the earth*, where ye appear and vanish away as a vapor. *And were wanton, lascivious or lewd* : cf. 1 Tim. 5 : 6, Gr. *Ye nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter* ; gratified your bodily

appetites, careless as brutes, and unconscious of the nearness of your doom.

4. Your treatment of the Messiah proves the justice of your punishment : *Ye condemned, ye murdered the Righteous One*. Ye gave your sentence against the Messiah, and murdered Him, the pre-eminently Righteous One. That this is the right interpretation, is clear : (1.) It is not at all probable that James would have passed by the great national sin of the Israelites ; a sin to which they were instigated by their rulers, or the rich and worldly-minded among them. Hence in this catalogue of the sins of the rich and powerful, it is very appropriately named last. (2.) Herein he acts as did Peter and Stephen : “ Ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and entreated a murderer to be granted unto you : ye killed the Prince of Life.” Acts 3 : 14, 15 ; cf. 2 : 23, 36. “ The Righteous One, of whom ye have now become the betrayers and murderers.” Acts 7 : 52. (3.) “ The Righteous One” is not used here collectively ; for the persecutions of the pious are before spoken of, and in the present tense, 2 : 6, 7 ; but here the aorist or past tense is used. (4.) There is no absurdity in supposing that some belonging to the ten tribes (Acts 2 : 5) were present at Jerusalem when our Lord was crucified, and approved of His condemnation and death. And the prophet, when predicting the repentance of the nation, takes for granted the guilt of the different tribes. Zech. 12 : 10-14.

Doth He not resist you ? or rather, *Doth he not array Himself against you ?* I mean the Righteous One, whom ye condemned and murdered. Is He not your enemy ; marshalling his forces to punish you ? (4 : 6, Gr.) The *not* (*ouk* = *nonne*) is an interrogative particle, requiring an affirmative answer, as in 2 : 5, 6, 7, 21, 25 ; 4 : 1, 4. It is as if James had said : Why are ye in the dispersion, instead of dwelling in your own land ? Deut. 28 : 25, 37 ; Lk. 21 : 24. Let your avaricious spirit, shown in these last days of God’s long-suffering ; your fraud, extortion, and oppression of the poor ; your luxurious and lascivious life, the pampering of

your appetites while destruction is near ; and above all, your condemnation and murder of the pre-eminently Righteous One, the Christ of God ; let these answer. Mat. 27 : 24, 25.

What untold miseries in a perpetual series have overtaken the Jews, since they cried out, " His blood be on us, and on our children !" Fearfully has their crowning sin been punished, and by the Messiah Himself.

But in rejecting and crucifying Jesus did not the rulers and the people sin through ignorance ? Acts 3 : 17. They did so ; but it was an ignorance wholly inexcusable, for by miracles of mercy and love the Father Himself sealed Jesus as the Christ, or fully confirmed Him as such ; and so our Lord Himself testifies. Jno. 6 : 27 ; 15 : 22-24. It was an ignorance that could only be forgiven to any by the intercession of the sin-bearing Messiah Himself. Lk. 23 : 34. Prejudices, whether arising from envy or heedlessness, and amidst the light that surrounded them, cannot be justified. Mat. 27 : 18.

The miseries denounced against impenitent sinners of the various classes mentioned in this context are felt not only in this world, but in the world of spirits, and in the ages that are coming. Jno. 8 : 21, 24 ; 1 Cor. 6 : 10.

1. *Howling* seems to be the primary meaning, like the Hebrew *yala*, and our *yell* = wail, or lament with doleful outcries : cf. Jer. 47 : 2 ; Isa. 65 : 14. Syr vg that are coming upon *you* ; but *your* miseries precedes ; B as the c. t. which is evidently genuine ; the other readings being appended explanations, and not over-accurate, since the perpetuity, more than the suddenness, of the evils is denoted.

3. *For* the last days ; but *en* does not admit of that translation : *in* the last days, is alone correct. If there be a difficulty, the honest way is not to cover it up by a mistranslation. To connect thus, As fire ye laid up treasure in the last days, is very forced and needless.

5. A B S vg., cop in a day of slaughter, K L syr Oec Thph as in a day of slaughter. To nourish the heart, is a hebraism, or antique mode of expression, = to refresh the body by eating and drinking : cf. Gen. 18 : 5 ; Ps. 104 : 15 ; Acts 14 : 17.

6. He doth not resist, or array Himself against you : the Messiah does not stop you in your sins ; He does not use His omnipotence to that end, but lets you alone : Lange and others.

⁷ Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. ⁸ Be ye also patient ; stablish your hearts : for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Wait patiently therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Brothers, i.e., brother believers. Therefore, or because the doom of the impious will be so awful, 1-6 vs. Wait patiently until, etc. Hold on until our Lord Himself comes ; both hope and patience being enjoined : as in Heb. 6 : 15. " After he had patiently waited." 1 Cor. 13 : 4. " Love patiently waiteth ;" suffereth long with hope and patience.

A steadfast continuance in well-doing and a steadfast endurance of trials and afflictions, are indispensable duties ; but without a well-grounded hope, who could so act and suffer ?

The great object of Christian hope is the coming of Jesus Christ our Lord. Tit. 2 : 13. The coming, or *parousia*, of the Lord here spoken of, is his second personal coming, and that only : the word being never used of his first advent. That the reader may satisfy himself that *parousia* means personal coming or presence, we refer to all the places where the word is found. In 1 Cor. 16 : 17, it is applied to the coming—*i.e.*, personal arrival or presence, of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus. And so 2 Cor. 7 : 6, 7, of Titus ; and 2 Cor. 10 : 10 ; Phil. 1 : 26 ; 2 : 12, of Paul.

It is used in the same signification in reference to our Lord, in the following passages : Mat. 24 : 3, 27, 37, 39 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 23 ; 1 Thes. 2 : 19 ; 3 : 13 ; 4 : 15 ; 5 : 23 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 1, 8 ; Jas. 5 : 7, 8 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 16 ; 3 : 4 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 28.

And once of the actual presence or arrival of the great day. 2 Pet. 3 : 12. (See Christocracy, Essay VII.) Eng. Vers. has for *parousia* " presence," twice ; elsewhere, " coming."

Once also of the man of sin. 2 Thes. 2 : 9.

If the meaning of a word or phrase can be settled by usage, then *the Parousia of our Lord, the Parousia of the Son of Man*, must mean, not his providential acts as God, not His working in the souls of men by His Spirit, not the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, but His personal presence in his Human nature, the literal coming, arrival and presence of the Theanthropos on earth : and that for all the purposes revealed in the Prophetic Word. For this we are to *wait patiently*—not act fanatically : cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 13. Paul also speaks of “the patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ,” the patience arising from that hope of which He is the great object. 1 Thes. 1 : 3. The same patient waiting is enjoined by the prophet. Ps. 37 : 7, 9, 34.

The apostles and prophets of the New Testament often excite to duty, and cheer under oppression and affliction, by the great motive of the personal coming of the Lord. To suppress this motive, this great object of a believer's hope, in preaching or writing, by putting death or any thing else in its place, is practically to declare that we are wiser than inspired men ; that we can judge better of the efficacy of motives than the infallible legates and servants of Christ.

Behold, the husbandman, etc. If he expect the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it from seedtime to harvest, when the earth receives the early and latter rain ; surely, ye believers should more patiently wait for the harvest of glory, to be reaped at the appearing of the Lord. *Do ye also wait patiently ; establish your hearts* : fix, made them steadfast ; hence, metaphorically, confirm or strengthen yourselves by a holy immovable courage, arising from hope and patience : cf. Lk. 22 : 32 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 10, Gr. *For the coming of the Lord draweth nigh* : lit., hath drawn nigh = is near. Be immovably bold, for His personal coming is not only certain, but nigh.

When faith and hope are weak, there can be no Christian heroism ; but the heart melts with fear, flutters with indecision, and frets with impatience. And especially is this

true when our faith and hope are weak as to the nearness of our Lord's personal coming.

Let scoffers ask, "Where is the promise of His coming?" 2 Pet. 3 : 4. Let others, from whom better things might be expected, say : "My Lord delayeth His coming;" we need not look for Him till the thousand years have come and are gone. Mat. 24 : 48. But let us believe and say : "The coming of the Lord is near." So let us establish our hearts, and patiently wait.

Whatever our trials may be, then, and however protracted, let us not become faint, but be strong-hearted ; for our Lord will soon be here, to restore all things. (Acts 3.) This is an inspired prescription, to prevent or cure that sickness of heart which is apt to seize us, when noticing the lawlessness of the incorrigible ; when feeling keenly the chastisement inflicted by our Father's hand ; or when considering the slow progress of truth and holiness in this rebellious province of God's vast empire. In these and similar circumstances, let us practically heed the precept before us : Wait patiently ; establish your hearts : for the coming of the Lord is nigh.

7. *The early and latter rain* ; the one generally beginning in October the other in March. Deut. 11 : 14 ; Jer. 5 : 24.

8. *The coming of the Lord is nigh*. Many needlessly perplex themselves about this and like expressions. It is always described as in some sense near. 2 Thes. 2 : 2, is no exception ; for there the Greek is *enes-teken* = *is present*, already come, as some mistakenly supposed : cf. Rom. 8 : 38 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 22 ; 7 : 26 ; Gal. 1 : 4 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 1 ; Heb. 9 : 9. Not found elsewhere in N. T.

It is near ; (1.) Because the present Christian dispensation is the last period of God's forbearance with the incorrigible. 5 : 3. And when the gospel of the kingdom has been preached in the whole inhabited earth, then shall the end of this age or dispensation come. Mat. 24 : 14. Now, who can tell exactly how long this dispensation will last ? But when it closes, Christ comes : cf. Mat. 24 : 14, with ver. 3, Gr. (2.) Because events, or a series of events, foretold to precede His coming, are either fulfilled or fulfilling, and this has been going on now for more than eighteen hundred years ; so that His personal coming is very nigh to us,

as compared with Christians of the first century ; though even then the first train of predicted events had started. Rev. 1 : 3 ; 22 : 20. (3.) Because all the flow of time from Christ's ascension until His second advent, is but a moment on God's clock of eternity. 2 Pet. 3 : 8. And His spokesmen measure time more by that clock, than by our watches. (4.) Because the precise time, the day and the hour, of our Lord's coming, has never been revealed. Mat. 24 : 36 ; Acts 1 : 6, 7.

Any one of these reasons, much more all combined, are sufficient to justify the language of the sacred writers on this subject.

⁹ Grudge (marg. groan, or grieve not) not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned : behold, the Judge standeth before the door.

Lit., *Groan not against one another, brothers, that ye be not judged. Behold the Judge standeth before the doors.* Groaning is an inarticulate manifestation of sorrow, accompanied with a desire corresponding to that which occasions the sorrow. In relation to ourselves, it is a natural sign of distress, and of a longing to get rid of any burden or evil. So Paul groaned with an intense desire to be clothed with an immortal body. 2 Cor. 5 : 4. And believers groan within themselves, while expecting the adoption, the redemption of their body. Rom. 8 : 23. In relation to others, groaning may be a natural indication of good-will and sympathy. So Jesus, in healing the deaf stammerer, not only looked to heaven, assured of His Father's approval, but groaned, that is, exhibited in this manner His good-will to and sympathy with that unhappy man. Mk. 7 : 34. So He groaned for, or in his behalf. But to *groan against* one another, is an indication of ill-will, a want of sympathy or love. The metaphor, then, may be thus explicated : Cherish no malignant feelings towards your brethren ; desire no evil to befall them. (Love one another, is the positive form of the precept.) Motives : To foster such a disposition, is practically to forget that ye are brothers in Christ's house ; that He alone is your Judge ; and that as such He standeth before the doors, ready to condemn all who cherish ill-will and malignity.

That ye be not judged, and, by implication, condemned, Mat. 7 : 1 ; condemned for want of Christian love : cf. 1 Jno. 4 : 7, 8 ; 3 : 14-20. *To stand before the doors*, by substitution, for to be near and ready to act. Christ is ever ready to judge the living and the dead, whether in the visible church or out of it, and He has been appointed by God for that purpose. 1 Pet. 4 : 5 ; Acts 10 : 42.

Christ's house or church, Heb. 3 : 8, has many rooms ; but before the doors standeth the Judge, His hand on the latch, ready at any time to enter, and decide on the eternal destiny of the inmates. When He enters the room where we dwell, shall He find us groaning against our brethren, or loving them with tender affections akin to His own ? (Phil. 1 : 8.) Hear Him speaking from heaven : " All the churches shall know that I am He who searcheth the reins and hearts : and I will give to every one of you according to your works." Rev. 2 : 23.

When we recollect how sinful it is to cherish any hatred against our brethren, how near the judgment of the churches is, and who the judge will be, it ought to awaken us to unfeigned repentance, and to the cultivation of a loving, generous, and forgiving spirit.

If the metaphor has been rightly explained, then the prohibition is a general one, extending to any and every exhibition of ill-will towards our brethren : such as envy, indignation from slight causes, contempt on account of natural bodily defects, and not bearing with one another in love, because of an imperfect or slow growth in Christian virtues ; and any other desire and affection, opposed to the law of Brotherly Love. A B K L S syr vg, lest ye be judged.

¹⁰ Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. ¹¹ Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord ; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Imitate the prophets in patient waiting, while suffering evil : Take them *as an example* (a model for imitation, as in

Jno. 13 : 15,) *of affliction*, lit. suffering of evil : cf. the cognate verb, 5 : 13 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 3, 9 ; 4 : 5. Take the description of their afflictions in the discharge of duty as a historical picture, setting forth how we must endure hardship as good soldiers of Christ. And amidst their troubles they cultivated hope and patience, or patiently waited for the Messiah : so also do ye. Patience alone is not meant, but hope and patience = *patient waiting* ; as in ver. 7.

I call you to the imitation of no common men, but *the prophets*, etc. The word *prophets* literally means *forespeakers*, they who stand before the Lord as his spokesmen, 1 Ki. 17 : 1 ; or those to whom and by whom He made known His will, or revealed truth, whether relating to the past, present, or future—in a word, inspired men. Moses, for example, was as much a prophet when describing the creation, as Isaiah when portraying the sufferings and glory of the Messiah. The same is equally true of all inspired men, who by mouth and pen stated and impressed eternal moral truth on the human conscience. All these *spoke in the name of the Lord* ; as His representatives and interpreters, or by His authority. Cf. Lk. 1 : 67 ; Jno. 4 : 19 (Ex. 7 : 1, with 4 : 16) ; 1 Pet. 1 : 10, 11 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 20, 21.

^{*}
Behold, we count them happy, or *call them blessed*, as the verb is rendered, Lk. 1 : 48, *who steadfastly endure*, are patient, or persevere in the discharge of duty under all difficulties : see notes on 1 : 2, 3. Or, *who have steadfastly endured*, who have finished their course on earth as just described. Either way, the persevering are rightly esteemed and called blessed ; blessed in this life, but more so in the world to come. 1 : 12.

Ye have heard of the patience of Job, etc. According to the punctuation of the English Version, the reference is to the happy result given by the Lord to Job's trials, proving the Lord's great grace and mercy.

But James, in our judgment, is dealing in short sentences,

and alludes to the death of the Lord Jesus : " Behold, we call them blessed who have steadfastly endured. Ye heard of the steadfast endurance of Job. Look also at the end of the Lord, for the Lord is large-hearted and merciful."

Often, when listening to the reading of Scripture or the conversation of your companions, *ye heard of the patience of Job*. I need not dwell on an example so well known to you, and so remarkable.

In his great trial, Job gradually conquered his passions, ever aimed to please God, and persevered in the conflict until he became wholly submissive to His will, and patiently expecting his Redeemer, 19 : 23-27, at last behaved and quieted himself as a weaned child. Let us do likewise.

Ye also saw the end of the Lord, that the Lord is large-hearted and merciful : some of you beheld the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, and learned thereby that He is full of tender affections and mercy. Or, according to another reading : *Look also at the end of the Lord, for the Lord*, etc. Consider the way in which He died. What unspeakable love and pity He exhibited, praying in his greatest anguish even for his murderers ! Look at this, and take Him as the perfect model for imitation. This we prefer, but either way the sense is substantially the same.

That the allusion to our Lord's death is not a forced interpretation, is evident from the fact that *the Lord* in this context means the Lord Jesus, vs. 7, 8, the Lord in whose name the prophets spoke, and whose personal coming is nigh, the Judge standing before the doors, ver. 9 ; cf. vs. 14, 15. Also, from the fact that *the end* is used to denote our Lord's death in Jno. 13 : 1. " He loved them to *the end*." It is hardly necessary to add that an exhortation to the imitation of Christ as the perfect model, following after the example of ancient saints, agrees well with Heb. 12 : 1-3. And it would be somewhat strange if no such exhortation occurred in the Epistle of James. But if this interpretation be rejected, an exhortation of that kind will be sought for in vain ; we mean, one in express terms : for such an ex-

hortation is contained by implication in the expression, "the Glorious One," 2 : 1.

10. A K L Oec, by the name (*to onomatē*) of the Lord ; B S vg syr (*en to onomatē*), In the name of the Lord.

11. K L cop sah Thph Oec, who steadfastly endure, as c. t.; A B T syr vg, who have steadfastly endured (1 aor. part.) : A L Thph, *idete*, which we take for the imperative, = see, or look at. B according to Lachmann has the same, but according to Mai by the second hand. K S Oec *eidete* = ye saw. It seems to be a variation per itacismum. We consider *idete* genuine. In the last clause of the verse, K L Thph omit the Lord, but A B (omitting the article) S syr cop sah vg Oec have it ; and it is, if the best and most ancient authorities are regarded, unquestionably genuine. Why it should have been inserted, if not so, is inexplicable. *Large-hearted, i.e., of very tender affections* ; his heart dilating with love : here only. Cf. Phil. 1 : 8. "God is my witness, how I long for you all with the tender *affections of Christ Jesus* ;" *with a love akin to His*.

¹² But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath : but let your yea be yea ; and *your* nay, nay ; lest ye fall into condemnation.

Abstain especially from all irreverence towards God ; subdue such a disposition, and let it not be shown by any forms of speech. Here James alludes to what the Lord says, Mat. 5 : 33-37. When hope and patience, as before commanded, are not diligently cultivated, then, when suffering evil from the hands of men, even the pious are in danger of transgressing the precept before us. Swear not, but pray, ver. 13.

The prohibition relates to ordinary discourse or conversation. *Swear not by heaven*, "for it is God's throne," *nor by the earth*, "for it is His footstool," *nor by any other oath*, or irreverent form of speech. *But let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay* ; use simple and truthful affirmations and denials, without the least tinge of profanity. "But what is more than these is from the evil one ;" originates from Satanic influences and temptations on a depraved disposition. Mat. 5 : 37 ; Jas. 3 : 6.

Many rabbins, of the apostolic age and since, teach that those vows are not binding, nor those oaths sinful, in which the name of God does not occur. (Philo, *Special Laws* : Yonge's Translation, vol. 3, pp. 255, 256.) But how our Lord deals with hypocritical vows and Jesuistical reservations, or profane trifling with sacred obligations, may be seen in Mat. 15 : 3-9 ; 23 : 16-22.

The precept, Deut. 6 : 13, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and *shalt swear by his name*," means, By His name only ; not by the name of a false god, or by any thing created by the true God.

Any kind of profane swearing, and especially by professed Christians, is perfectly inexcusable, and dishonoring to God and the Lord Christ. And it is exceedingly dangerous : *that ye fall not under judgment* : according to the reading now generally received ; in which there seems to be an allusion to the threatening contained in the third commandment. *To fall under judgment*, by substitution, for to be condemned under the sentence of the Judge ; as "to lift up," in 4 : 10, is to acquit or forgive.

S syr vg, let your word be, as in Mat. 5 : 37. A B S syr vg cop sah, under judgment, *hupo krisin* ; K L Oec Thph, *eis hupokrisin*, a mistake by joining *hupo* and *krisin* in one word, and then inserting *eis* to complete the sense.

¹³ Is any among you afflicted ? let him pray. Is any merry ? let him sing psalms. ¹⁴ Is any sick among you ? let him call for the elders of the church ; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord : ¹⁵ and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up ; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Adapt your devotions to your circumstances. *Afflicted*, or *suffering evil* : cf. ver. 10. Prayer and thanksgiving should be unceasingly offered, 1 Thes. 5 : 17, 18. But when afflicted and persecuted, prayer is especially necessary. "Call upon me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Ps. 50 : 15. When afflicted,

we may pray with the prayer of nature ; giving expression to our natural feelings by asking for relief and deliverance. So our Lord Himself did : " Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." And Paul, " For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." But we must always combine with it the prayer of submission : " Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Also, petitions for an increase in holiness, or that our minds may be properly disciplined by the affliction. Heb. 12 : 10, 11. We must likewise pray in faith ; not doubting God's willingness to sustain, console and purify us in " the furnace of affliction," and to give us at last " the crown of Life." Jas. 1 : 6-8, 12.

Is any cheerful? It is the opposite of despondency : cf. Acts 27 : 22, 25. *Let him sing psalms* : lit. let him sing, or play and sing : to the honor of God and of Christ, is implied. Rom. 15 : 9 ; Eph. 5 : 19, 20 ; cf. Col. 3 : 16. When in a happy mood of mind, however occasioned, forget not to play in your heart and sing with gratitude to the Lord. Let your gladness be that becoming a Christian, mingled with adoring gratitude—not shown by merely animal motions, or childish glee.

Is any sick among you? Some of the most eminent servants of Christ have constantly struggled under bodily infirmities, and yet they have done good service for the Master. Paul speaks of the frequent sicknesses of his most beloved co-worker. 1 Tim. 5 : 23 ; cf. Phil. 2 : 19-22, 25-30, vs.

Pain and sickness do not tend by any natural process to sanctify the soul, but by the indwelling operations of the Spirit, they do ; especially in the bringing down of pride. So it was with Paul's " thorn in the flesh," or his painful bodily affliction. 2 Cor. 12 : 7, 9.

In sickness we greatly need the help of others, always as to the body, and often as to the soul ; and hence James directs us to seek for it : *Let him call to himself the elders of the church*, or congregation to which he belongs. Some of the elders, or presbyters, of Christian congregations, devoted themselves more particularly to teaching ; others, to ruling :

for this seems to us the only fair and natural explanation of 1 Tim. 5 : 17. And James here takes it for granted that there was a plurality of elders in the churches established among the dispersed tribes ; and that such elders had then the miraculous gift of healing ; which is evident from what follows : *And let them pray over him*, standing by his couch ; or, *pray for him*, without regard to the posture : the elders *anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord*, Mk. 6 : 13, not as the means of an ordinary healing, but extraordinary ; anointing him as the representatives of the Lord Jesus, and by His authority, or using this sign of the miraculous healing about to be wrought. *And the prayer of faith*, in its relation to miraculous cures, 1 Cor. 12 : 9, *will save the weary one*, be the instrument of his restoration to health, *and the Lord*, the Lord Jesus as the efficient agent, *shall raise him up*, lift him from his bed ; cause him to stand, leap, and walk, and glorify his deliverer. *And if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him* : if his sickness has been caused by his sins, the guilt shall be remitted, or his liability to further bodily chastisement shall cease : cf. 1 Cor. 11 : 30.

In such cases it is not necessary to suppose that all the elders were present, but two or three were necessary, in order to attest to those not present the manner, time, and reality of the cure.

The apostles, elders, and others, were endowed with the gift of healing. 1 Cor. 12 : 9 ; Mk. 6 : 13 ; 16 : 17, 18. But they could not exercise that gift according to their own will and pleasure ; for, if so, it is not likely that Paul would have left Trophimus sick at Miletus, and Timothy laboring under frequent attacks of sickness. 2 Tim. 4 : 20 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 23.

It could in fact be exercised only as our Lord saw fit, or when He made known His will as to the healing, and that in a peculiar manner, to His instrumental agents : most probably by an internal suggestion of His Spirit, directing it to be done in particular instances. (See Acts 8 : 29 ; 10 : 19.)

With every suggestion or direction of this kind, there was always required a faith and prayer corresponding ; or an unwavering persuasion and supplication that the Lord would effect the cure by them at that time, and on the person or persons before them : and this is "the prayer of faith" here spoken of by James. If this faith was wanting or wavered in the instrumental agents, the cure was not effected, when attempted. Mat. 17 : 19-21.

Neither could the sick be miraculously cured, except the sufferer himself "had faith to be healed ;" or an undoubting persuasion that the Lord Jesus would heal him at that time, and by those who were present for that purpose. Acts 14 : 9 ; cf. Mat. 9 : 22, 28, 29.

As to the spirit of this text, or the general truth underlying the specific direction, it follows that it is the duty of the elders of a church to visit the sick and pray for them, not the teaching-elder alone. And that it is the duty of the sick, to call for or invite the elders so to visit them. Although without the gift of healing, nothing forbids fervent prayer on their part, with suitable instruction, for the benefit of the weary ones. And who can estimate the amount of good that might be thus accomplished ? If one man be expected to do the whole work on a farm, many portions of it must either lie waste, or be poorly tilled. (1 Cor. 3 : 9.)

The papal clergy use "extreme unction," or anointing with oil only in the last agonies, or at the point of death, to benefit, as they say, the departing spirit ! But the anointing of which James speaks was a sign of miraculous restoration to health, not a preparation for death.

In sickness, while using the best medical help in our power, let us never forget to trust in and pray to our Lord, the great physician. 2 Chron. 16 : 12.

The Presbyters of the Church : see Schaff's "History of the Apostolic Church," and Chancellor King's "Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church, which flourished within the first Three Hundred Years after Christ. Faithfully Collected out of the Fathers and Extant Writings of those Ages." Also Mos-

heim's Com., by Vidal and Murdock. These works are well adapted to stimulate thought, and help in some measure to answer very important questions : What is the constitution or mode of government of the Christian Church as established by the Apostles ? And did they prescribe one invariable mode for all the churches ? What was the constitution of the Church during the Ante-Nicene Age, or from the death of the Apostles until the so-called conversion of Constantine, and the assembling of the Council of Nice ?

In the best treatises on Systematic Divinity, not excepting the most recent, not only Eschatology, but Ecclesiology is not scientifically treated. The materials collected are copious, but the thorough investigation of them from Biblical and historic sources, and the logical classification and mode of explaining them are still a desideratum.

Did Christ prescribe one invariable mode of government for His Church ? And if so, what is it ? And can it be proved from the New Testament that His Apostles actually organized all the churches gathered by them according to that one mode or model ? Questions not easily answered, owing to the prejudices arising from education ; from traditional theology, or rabbinic Protestantism.

We should not forget the peculiarities of the Apostolic Church, originating from their extraordinary officers, and the *charismata*, or spiritual gifts. Are any Apostles, or other inspired men now teaching in the Church ? Have any presbyters the gift of healing ? Are any other miracles wrought through the officers or members of Christ's Church ? As to such things the Apostolic Church is peculiar.

And, while many Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Congregationalists are still contending for the divine right of their several modes of government, the nature of the present work permits us only to suggest as follows : In every rightly constituted Church of Christ now existing, it seems necessary, from the nature of the case, that there should be *teachers* or preachers of the Word, duly trained and controlled. "Are all teachers ?" Also, *rulers*, to restrain the disorderly, according to the laws of Christ. Are all, or at least, should all be rulers ? And *deacons*, or officers appointed by the Church to provide for the poor ; for we will have them with us till Christ comes. Cf. 1 Pet. 5 : 1-4 ; Jas. 3 : 1, 2 ; Acts 6.

¹⁶ Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. ¹⁷ Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain : and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. ¹⁸ And

he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

Confess therefore the sins (or, the falls) to one another, according to the reading now generally received—*i.e.*, the sins, or such sins as are mentioned in the preceding verse ; but here the precept relates not to presbyters, but private Christians. Confess the sins which you suppose have caused sickness to come upon you, and which are wounding your consciences ; for example, your groaning against, or ill-will shown to, your brethren, or injuries inflicted on them, for which the Lord is chastising you. Then, the clause, “that ye may be healed,” must be literally taken. *To one another* ; frankly acknowledge the facts in the case to them : *and pray for one another*. But for what purpose ? *In order that*, by an ingenuous acknowledgment on your part and by a prayerful forgiving spirit on theirs, *ye may be healed*. Cf. Mk. 16 : 17, 18.

Others make these words equivalent in sense to Mat. 5 : 23, 24 ; Lk. 17 : 3, etc. But the former interpretation agrees better with the foregoing context, and also with what follows : Do not suppose that the prayer of one not an elder is of no use in the matter ; for *the inworking prayer of a righteous man availeth much ; has much strength*, or prevails with God : perhaps, an allusion to what the Eternal Word said to Jacob. Gen. 32 : 28. An *inworking prayer* is one that is at work in the soul, thoroughly active there, fervent, importunate, or earnest, like that of Elijah. This kind of prayer availeth much in bringing down judgments or blessings from the Lord. (See notes below.)

Elijah (the Greek form for which is *Elias*) *was a man of like affections with us* : as in Acts 14 : 15. We are not immortal beings as ye suppose, but “men of like affections with you,” poor mortals, of the same physical and mental constitution as yourselves. *And with prayer he prayed—i.e.*, most earnestly, Lk. 22 : 15, *that it might not rain : and it rained not on the land three years and six months*.

The Israelites addressed might say in their hearts : Why dost thou bring forward the example of Elijah ? He was a very eminent prophet and the great restorer of the law. To this latent objection James replies : Be it so ; still he was a man, not essentially different from others, and his prayer was heard, not because he was a prophet, but because he was a righteous man ; one who feared God, and who was jealous for the honor of the Lord of Hosts. Elijah was indeed exempted from death by God's wonderful grace, but for all that, while living on earth, he was subject to hunger, sickness, and mental distress. When he prayed, it was not an angel, but a man like ourselves. The example, then, is not farfetched and *irrelevant*, but obvious and to the point.

The prayer of Elijah did not spring from private revenge, but from an honest, holy regard for the glory of God, and from an unfeigned desire of recalling the people from their abominable idolatry. Hence, after they had acknowledged Jehovah to be the true God, 1 Ki. 18 : 42, etc., *he prayed again* ; loving the people, while hating their sins. *And the heaven gave rain*, etc. A miracle, properly so called, is an extraordinary work wrought by God in the external world, with means or without them, as seems good to Himself. (See Hodge : Syst. Theol.) Here heaven and earth, or a part of our world with its atmosphere, were miraculously wrought upon by Him in hindering for a time their ordinary effects, and then in instantaneously causing them to act ; and all this because of the prayers of His servant Elijah.

Second causes, or the so-called laws of nature, are not *uncaused* independent forces, nor are they spiritual entities *working* in external nature, but " the ordinances of Jehovah," His laws, or the appointed ways and means through which He ordinarily works. And when He works through them in an extraordinary manner, with greater rapidity than usual, or hindering for a time their ordinary effects, it seems to be, not in violation of these laws, but in conformity with them : as in the miracle here referred to. But no wit of men can prove that God has so bound Himself to these laws

as never to act in external nature, without or beyond them ; and that for ends worthy of Himself, and beneficial to men and angels.

The prayer of Elijah was in one respect peculiar, since it was inspired prayer, inwrought in his mind by the Spirit as an indication of God's will in reference to apostate Israel : and so the prophet himself understood it. 1 Ki. 17 : 1. Men not inspired cannot, therefore, rightly imitate the prophet in praying for special judgments on a church or nation.

But the Holy Spirit helps all believers in their prayers, teaching them how to pray and what to pray for ; subduing their sins, and strengthening them in all their holy strivings. Rom. 8 : 26, 27. He succors them as saints, as well as He illumined others as prophets.

Some affirm or think that prayer availeth nothing. "What is the Almighty that we should serve Him ; and what profit shall we have if we pray unto Him ?" These are practical atheists. Others chiefly speak of its reflex influence ; or its tendency in taming the passions, confirming holy resolutions, giving peace to troubled spirits, and the like. But we should never forget that it has power with God and with Christ in obtaining blessings, temporal and spiritual, for ourselves and our brethren. 1 Jno. 5 : 14, etc.

Confess therefore A B K S vg cop sah ; L Thph Oec confess. A B S the sins ; K L thè falls, as c. t.

Private confession of sins to a minister of religion, is not required by Scriptural authority ; and the "auricular confession," insisted on by the Papal clergy is every way objectionable. (1.) They say such confession must be made to a priest in every parish, once a year at least ; but Christ alone is priest in the present dispensation. Let the people, then, confess to and get absolution from Him ; for He has the right to forgive sins. (2.) It is impossible for any one to make such a particular confession as they require, once a year or oftener. (3.) But if it could be done, it would have no connection with forgiveness, inasmuch as a judicial absolution of sin can be declared only by God or Christ. (4.) By this auricular confession the Romanists acquire an enormous and deadly power over their votaries ; for he who holds and despotically

directs the conscience of another has the whole man as his victim and slave. *The inworking prayer* : if Pauline usage is to settle the matter, then *energoumene* is a participle of the middle voice = showing itself active, inworking, working or active ; as in 2 Cor. 1 : 6 ; Gal. 5 : 6 ; Eph. 3 : 20 ; Col. 1 : 29. But James seems to use it as passive = *inwrought*—*i.e.*, by the Spirit, or inspired ; and then the reference is to believers (distinguished from presbyters), as exercising the gift of healing : the inwrought prayer of faith necessary on such occasions. So, too, the whole context, vs. 14–17, is throughout consistent ; the prayer of the elders, of any righteous man among them, and of Elijah, being generically the same. *The inwrought prayer of a righteous man*, not merely presbyters and prophets, *availeth much*. *Three years and six months* : cf. Lk. 4 : 25. Elijah showed himself to Ahab in the third year from his going to live at Zarephath, 1 Ki. 18 : 1, but before that he was sustained by God at the brook Cherith. 1 Ki. 17.

¹⁹ Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him ; ²⁰ let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

Strive to convert the wanderer. The connection with the foregoing context seems to be as follows : Not only earnestly desire the bodily health of your brethren, 3 Jno. ver. 2, and use the gift bestowed on any of you for that purpose, but labor and pray for the eternal salvation of any wanderer. *If any one among you be led astray from the truth*, be deceived as to the doctrines taught and the duties required by the Gospel or Holy Scripture, and so wander in error and sin, *and any one convert him*, turn or bring him back as the instrumental agent into the path prescribed by God ; *let him know*, for his great encouragement and as a motive to urge him on in that good work, *that he who converteth a sinner from the wandering of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins*—*i.e.*, shall be instrumental in saving the wanderer's soul from everlasting misery, and in obtaining from God the pardon of the many sins of the one now converted. *Death*, as in 1 : 15 ; Rom. 6 : 23. *The truth* : cf. 1 : 18, 22, 25.

But how is it effected ? By our fervent prayers for a

wanderer, the Lord Jesus may renew him, and bring him to Himself in penitence and faith unfeigned. He may also bless our instructions, admonitions, and example to the same end. And if so, we shall instrumentally save his soul from death, and in the same manner cover his many sins from the eye of God's justice.

By whom should it be attempted? Not by officers of the Church alone, but by any and every disciple, according to his ability, and as he has opportunity.

And what a motive is presented to labor wisely and pray fervently for any whom we see wandering from God, truth and duty! For to be instrumental in saving men from everlasting woe, and in like manner obtaining for them everlasting forgiveness; this, indeed, will be "a crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming," not only for apostles and elders, but for any disciple who in this way prays and labors to glorify God and honor his Redeemer.

B K L sah Thph Oec shall save a soul, A S syr vg Did shall save his soul. *Shall cover a multitude of sins*: some suppose that James alludes to Prov. 10 : 12, but it is more probable that he alludes to expressions like that in Ps. 32 : 1, cf. Rom. 4 : 5-8. To those who receive the Scriptures as a revelation from God, it is evident that the Father by the efficiency of the Spirit saves souls from death, and on the ground of Christ's obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, forgives a multitude of sins: this, however, does not hinder God from using His Word and men as dispensers of it, in order to impart these unspeakable blessings. 1 : 18 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 5-7 ; Acts 2 : 38 ; 26 : 17, 18.



THE
FIRST EPISTLE
OF
PETER.

INTRODUCTION.

The genuineness of this epistle is indisputable, it being universally received as Peter's by the ancient church ; which is abundantly confirmed by the internal evidence, or contents of the Epistle.

The style is like the author, fervent, bold, rapid, and impassioned ; imagination and a pratico-discursive power ever flashing forth together.

Persons addressed. There are three principal opinions. (1.) Gentile converts, chiefly, or exclusively. (2.) Jews and Gentiles, with a special reference to the former. (3.) Jewish converts exclusively.

The Apostle himself describes them thus : " To the elect strangers of the dispersion of Pontus," etc. Now the word *dispersion* (*diaspora*) is the technical term used to describe Israelites, not dwelling in their own land, but scattered among the Gentiles : as in Jno. 7 : 35, and Sept. Ps. 146 : 2 (Eng. Vers., Ps. 147) ; 2 Mac. 1 : 27 ; Judith 5 : 19. (Cf. Introduction to James 4.) It is no reply to say, that the word " strangers," or sojourners, is metaphorically used to denote those who feel and act like strangers in this world ; inasmuch as it is wholly contrary to Apostolic usage to employ a metaphor in the inscription of a letter.

Peter also distinguishes them from the Gentiles, 2 : 12 ; 4 : 3, and hence they must have been Jewish converts. As to the allusion to their former idolatry, that may be accounted for by supposing that some of the Israelites addressed, in their unrenewed state, and under the pressure of temptation

or persecution, had actually fallen into gross idolatry. No doubt, there were many Gentile converts in the churches of the five provinces, but Peter directs his epistle, not to them, but to the dispersed Israelites in those churches. And both epistles are addressed to the same persons. 2 Pet. 3 : 1.

The second opinion probably originated from a desire of easily explaining 4 : 3, and if any adhere to that hypothesis, there is no need of dispute, since it is a matter of no great importance, exegetically or practically. (Calvin suggests that "abominable idolatries" may be used by synecdoche for the superstitions then prevalent among the Jews.) The first opinion needs no refutation.

The Scope, or principal design. It is clear that those addressed were in the midst of various trials, exposed to the lash of scoffing and slanderous tongues, and in fearful expectation of still severer persecutions. 1 : 6, 7 ; 2 : 12 ; 3 : 14, 16, 17 ; 4 : 12-19 ; 5 : 8-10. His aim, then, is to establish or "strengthen his brethren," Lk. 22 : 32 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 10, Gr., to confirm them in the faith, and to encourage them to perseverance during their time of trial, by reminding them of their privileges, consolations and duties as God's beloved children : and so the Apostle himself explains it. 5 : 12 ; cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 1, 2. Moreover, by sending *Silvanus*, or Silas, with this epistle, Peter emphatically signified to the Jewish converts his agreement with Paul as to what constitutes the true gospel of God. Cf. 1 Eph. 1 : 12 ; 2 Eph. 3 : 15.

Place and date. In 5 : 13, *Babylon* is designated as the place where it was written ; by which we understand Babylon in Assyria, the city so called by way of eminence : otherwise, some adjunct or descriptive phrase would have been added. Many Jews according to the testimony of Josephus, resided there, and beyond the Euphrates. Ant. 15 : 2, 3, and 3 : 1. And it is highly probable that the great Apostle of the circumcision would not neglect to preach the gospel to them. Gal. 2 : 7-9.

Others think that it was written at Rome : because ancient writers testify that Peter suffered martyrdom there.

(Their testimony will be examined in our introduction to the second epistle.) But even if he was put to death there, *that* is no convincing proof that he wrote this epistle in the city. He certainly was not there when Paul wrote to the Philippians, to Philemon, to the Ephesians, Colossians, and the second epistle to Timothy ; otherwise, Paul would have mentioned him with love and honor, not passed him by unnoticed.

Another argument is, that Rome is tropically so called, since Rome was like Babylon in idolatry and persecuting power. This is an ancient opinion, as appears from the following extract from Eusebius : E. H. 2 : 15. " Peter makes mention of Mark in his first epistle, which *they say* he also composed at Rome, and that he signifies this, when in highly tropical language (or, with an unusual trope, Gr. *tropikōteron*) he calls the city Babylon ; in these words" : and then he cites 1 Pet. 5 : 13, as in the common text.

But all attempts to justify this mode of explanation are untenable. (1.) If " Babylon" be used by a trope, it must be by a very violent sort of elliptical metaphor : *in* [Rome which is] *Babylon*. But this is adding to the text the name of a city, Rome, which is found here in no manuscripts or versions ; and to support a say-so, a general rumor or tradition then current. Besides, when an elliptical metaphor is used, the subject is always known from the connection or near context : as in the examples adduced in the Introduction to James 13. (2.) It is indeed highly tropical language ; so much so that it violates the laws of such language altogether, to suppose that one geographical name can be descriptive of another entirely different ; and that in the postscript of a letter. If such an explanation be valid in the postscript, why not in the inscription ? And then how could it be proved that Peter wrote to any in the five provinces of Asia Minor ? (3.) " Babylon," in the Revelation, is a symbol (not a trope) representing apostate ecclesiastical hierarchies ; but this epistle is written in ordinary language, literal and figurative, and hence to argue from the **one to**

the other is folly. (4.) If Peter ever was at Rome, the word Babylon as here used is no proof of it. It might as well be said that in the title-page of Schaff's "History of the Apostolic Church," *New York* means *Chicago*.

But it has been suggested that Silas might explain the meaning of "Babylon" to those addressed. To which it is enough to say, he might not : and this suggestion is as good as the other ; for if Silas delivered the epistle, or copies of it, to the various churches of Asia Minor, or to those in the most populous cities, or to the church in Ephesus to be by them copied and transmitted to the rest ; on either supposition there could be no need of an enigmatical name to designate the place where it was composed, and whence it was sent. If in such circumstances the name of a city appears in a letter, it must be literally taken.

What is more natural than to suppose that Peter would visit his brethren of the Eastern dispersion ? Gal. 2 : 7-9. Now, 1 Pet. 5 : 13, makes this supposition an historical fact.

It is probable that this epistle was composed *after* the Pauline epistles above mentioned ; and if, in 4 : 12-19, there is an allusion to the persecution of the Christians in the reign of Nero, then it must have been written after that well known and remarkable event. (See Hug's Int. N. T. by Fosdick.)

Principal Topics.—A. Introduction or doctrinal exordium, 1-12. Their privileges as God's chosen. His wonderful grace in their salvation, present and future.

B. On this introduction is based the parenetic part of the epistle ; or exhortations and consolations with regard to the duties binding on them as chosen, redeemed and regenerated :

I. Their duties and privileges as believers in Christ, children of God, and brethren of His family : or, their obligations and encouragements as members of the Christian Church, 1 : 13 to 2 : 10.

II. Their duties as members of the State and family, 2 : 11 to 3 : 7.

III. Duties becoming them in every relation of life, not only to one another, but to revilers and the malicious, 3 : 8-13.

IV. Their duties and encouragements as persecuted disciples exposed to martyrdom, 3 : 14 to 4 : 19.

V. Admonitions to the Presbyters, 5 : 1-4.

VI. Concluding exhortations, 5-11.

C. Postscript, 12-14.

Our commentaries on the first and second Epistles of Peter, the former published in 1851, and the latter in 1862, are in this work wholly revised and re-written.

COMMENTARY.

CHAPTER I.

Synopsis of Contents :

I. In the doctrinal exordium, we have

1. The inscription and salutation, 1, 2.

2. A thanksgiving for the gracious ends God had in view in their regeneration, 3-5.

3. The great joy of the disciples, arising from an anticipation of the future results of their trials, and from a consciousness of their faith in and love to Jesus Christ, 6-9.

4. An illustration, or confirmation, of the greatness and certainty of their salvation in Christ, 10-12.

II. Duties flowing from their great privileges as before stated : Hope perfectly for complete salvation at Christ's coming ; abstain from former sins, and imitate God in His moral perfections ; walk in a childlike fear ; and cultivate fervent brotherly love, 13-25.

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,² elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ ; grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

The writer describes himself by his name and office ; and the persons addressed, by their outward condition, places of abode, and peculiar privileges as the elect of God. *Peter* : his original name was Simon, or Simeon. Acts 15 : 14 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 1, Gr. Our Lord surnamed him Cephas, or Peter,

meaning a rock, when He called him to be His disciple and apostle. Jno. 1 : 43 ; Lk. 6 : 14. *An apostle of Jesus Christ* : not the Prince of the Apostles, but one of the twelve, named apostles by Christ Himself ; of the same rank and dignity with the rest. The apostles were the legates, ambassadors extraordinary, or special messengers of Jesus Christ, who has all authority in heaven and on earth. Mat. 28 : 18.

The main characteristics of the office : (1.) The apostles were chosen immediately by Christ Himself. Lk. 6 ; Mk. 3 ; Mat. 10. (2.) They received an infallible knowledge of Divine truth from the Holy Ghost, and through the agency of the same Spirit taught it infallibly by mouth and pen. Cf. Jno. 16 : 13, 14, with 1 Jno. 4 : 6 ; 1 Thes. 4 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 37. (3.) The reality of their commission and the reception of the Spirit as just stated, with the consequent truth of their doctrines, were attested by many indisputable miracles. Heb. 2 : 1-4 ; 2 Cor. 12 : 12 ; Mk. 16 : 20. (4.) They were the principal witnesses, both competent and credible, of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Acts 1 : 3 ; 3 : 15 ; 10 : 40, 41. Hence, to be an apostle, it was necessary to have seen Jesus after His resurrection. Acts 26 : 16, with 1 Cor. 9 : 1. (5.) They were chosen to lay the foundations of the Christian Church by gathering and teaching disciples, appointing its officers, regulating its discipline, and by the general ordering and government of its affairs, Mat. 28 : 19, 20 ; Tit. 1 : 5 ; 1 Cor. 5 ; in a word, they were appointed and qualified to furnish the Church with an infallible rule of faith and duty until the return of Christ the Lord.

Accordingly, it is obvious that the apostles as apostles can have no successors. If presbyter-bishops set forth apostolic doctrine and govern kindly the churches, they may and do succeed them as teachers and presbyters, but not as apostles. 5 : 1-4.

Lit., *To the elect strangers of the dispersion of Pontus*, etc. See Introduction. They who reside in a foreign land without the rights of citizens are *parepidēmoi*, *strangers* or sojourners (cf. Eph. 2 : 19). In 2 : 11 ; Heb. 11 : 13, it is un-

happily rendered "pilgrims." The five provinces mentioned belonged to Asia Minor. The Asia mentioned is the Proconsular Asia, in which were the seven churches. Rev. I : 4. Pliny's celebrated letter to Trajan, A.D. 107, shows how extensively Christianity had spread in Pontus and Bithynia, and what firm root it had taken in the hearts of the people.

The word *elect* must either be mentally supplied before "according to the foreknowledge," etc., or placed as in the English Version. The latter mode exhibits the sense more readily to an English reader ; but it is put by Peter *before* "foreigners of the dispersion," in order to direct their attention instantly to the great grace and mercy of God, as shown to them : little known on earth, but well known in heaven.

Chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father : selected in a manner suitable to His foreknowledge ; according to that as the rule of His action in the matter. The foreknowledge, purpose, and love of God are in Him inseparable, but still His foreknowledge does not mean, except it be by implication, purpose or love ; and hence they are elsewhere distinguished both by Peter and Paul. Acts 2 : 23 ; Rom. 8 : 29. All worlds, all creatures, all events, what we must call past, present, or future, with all their complications and results to endless ages, ever stand right before the eye of the Omniscient : His knowledge is absolutely perfect, a before-knowledge, not a mere precognition. This clause, then, shows us *the eternity* of the choice, and *the wisdom* of it. (The gracious purpose of the Father is implied in the word *elect* ; for a choice without an act of the will is impossible.)

The Father *knew them as His chosen from eternity* : cf. 2 Tim. 2 : 19, Gr. ; Eph. 1 : 4. They were ever before the eye of His omniscience as "His own elect."

The knowledge of God being absolutely perfect, it is impossible for Him to make any mistakes in selecting the objects of His mercy. His choice of them, therefore, must be *infinitely wise*, and based on the very best possible reasons :

and this remains true, whether we can discern any of those reasons or not, and even if some men find fault with God, cavil in their pride and ignorance, and, with Satanic envy and rage, blaspheme. " Nevertheless the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal : The Lord knew them that are His," etc.

But how can the Father's choice of any become known ? The Apostle answers : Chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, *in sanctification of the Spirit*. It appears in that holiness which proceeds from the Spirit. So the Father manifests His election of men : cf. 2 Pet. 1 : 10 ; Rom. 8 : 28, 29 ; 1 Thes. 1 : 4, 5 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 13. Sanctification here denotes that work of the Spirit which begins in the human soul at regeneration, and ever goes on in depth, thoroughness and power, so that even the body becomes a temple of the Holy Ghost. Phil. 1 : 6 ; 1 Cor. 6 : 19.

Unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. This clause exhibits the ends for which the choice of God is made, or rather, what He intended it to result in, even in the present world—namely, that the chosen and sanctified should obey Jesus Christ, and be sprinkled with his blood. *Obedience*, lit. listening or hearkening = faith and obedience, or obedience arising from faith : as in 1 : 22 ; Rom. 1 : 5 ; cf. Rom. 10 : 16. *Sprinkling of the blood* ; in our idiom, *with the blood*. The allusion is to the typical sprinklings of blood under the law. Heb. 9 : 13, 19, 21. And *sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ* is used, by substitution, for the application to them of the benefits of His sacrifice. The sense then is : Chosen to believe in and obey Jesus Christ, and so to have the benefits of His sacrifice applied unto you. Cf. 1 Jno. 1 : 7 ; Heb. 9 : 13, 14 ; 10 : 22.

The salutation very appropriately follows : *Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied*. May God continue to remember you with the favor He shows unto His chosen, and bestow on you all the blessedness which flows from the sanctification of the Spirit, combined with your faith and obedience to Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you.

The election of men is attributed to God the Father, their sanctification to the Spirit, and their redemption to Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son. God's choice of men, as stated in Scripture, gives not the least encouragement to those who live in sin; for the Father manifests His wise and eternal choice in sanctifying them by the Spirit, who with Christ's blood sprinkles and delivers them from an evil conscience, while they believe in and obey the Redeemer. Heb. 10 : 22. And hence they who are conscious of holy desires stirring within them, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who take delight in obeying Jesus Christ, and have faith in His blood, ought indeed to be glad; for these things prove that God has chosen them.

Elect does not mean effectually called; for so it would be confounded with "sanctification of the Spirit," and Peter elsewhere distinguishes between calling and election. 2 Eph. 1 : 10. Nothing is gained here by rendering "*consecration* of the Spirit": cf. the *usus loquendi* in Rom. 6 : 19, 22; 1 Cor. 1 : 30; Heb. 12 : 14. *In* sanctification, etc. The preposition, when tropically used, indicates not merely that in which something else (immaterial) is contained, consists, appears, but the sphere in which some power is exerted, the manner, means, occasion, and cause. (Winer. § 48.) Here, the sphere or element in which God's election moves, appears, or exerts its power = shown by: cf. 3 : 14. "*Shown by* the incorruptible ornament," etc. Heb. 3 : 12. "*Shown by* apostacy from the living God." The ultimate end of the Divine election is stated in the subsequent context; here, the present effects of the choice: (See Calvin in loc.) *eis* = leading to, as in ver. 7.

Peace, in the apostolic salutations, like the Hebrew *shalom*, means *all bliss*, complete happiness. Cf. 5 : 14; Lk. 24 : 36; Jno. 20 : 19, 21, 26.

* Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, *to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, *who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

A sublime outburst of thanksgiving for the gracious ends God has in view in the regeneration of the chosen. *Blessed* —*i.e.*, worthy of the highest adoration and praise: cf. Eph.

I : 3 ; Lk. I : 68 ; Rom. I : 25. *Us* refers to the elect before mentioned. God is described from His relation to our Adonai, or supreme Lord, Jesus the Messiah ; and from His relation to the chosen, as the author of their regeneration to a living hope, of their perseverance and final salvation.

As to our Lord's human nature, God is its creator and preserver, Jno. 20 : 17, though this nature, from the incarnation till now, has ever existed only in union with His divine nature, and so it will exist forever. Lk. I : 35 ; I Tim. 3 : 16 ; I Cor. 15 : 28. As to His divine nature, our Lord is God's own Son in a peculiar sense ; personally distinct, yet of the same essence with the Father. In a word, Jesus Christ is a being perfectly unique, or God manifested in the flesh : cf. I Jno. I.

Who according to His abundant mercy regenerated us unto a hope living by the resurrection, etc. Regenerated or begat us again : the metaphor means, Gave us a new and holy life like His own, or, made us partakers of His holiness : cf. notes on Jas. I : 18 ; 2 Pet. I : 4. *According to His abundant mercy* : according to that as the internal law, or rule of His action in the matter. No cause out of God is assigned for our regeneration to a living hope, perseverance and complete salvation : the motive is not any foreseen goodness in man, but great mercy in God. *Unto, with a view to, or, for a living hope* : in order that the regenerated might have in this world a hope holy in its tendency, and perpetually active, or lively ; a hope inseparably connected with regeneration, or spiritual life in the soul. So the metaphor *living* is best explained. Cf. I : 23 ; 2 : 4, 5 ; Jno. 4 : 10, 11, with ver. 14 ; I Jno. 3 : 3, with 1-2, and 2 : 29. *By the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead* : if this clause be connected with *he begat us again*, then the sense is : God, that we might have a living hope, regenerated us by the power of the risen Saviour ; which is explained by what Peter says, Acts 2 : 32, 33. If it be connected with *living*, immediately preceding it in the original, then the sense is : God regenerated us to obtain a hope that is living through

His resurrection ; a hope that has a holy nimbleness and perpetual activity, since we know that the resurrection of Christ is a demonstration that the Father will not only justify, but glorify the renewed. Rom. 4 : 25 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 20. We prefer the latter mode of explanation, since the Apostle seems to explain it so in 1 : 21. But either way, it is indisputable that *a living hope* is one great end for which the Father regenerates the chosen, and that this hope is obtained *through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*. The object of the hope is not stated, but it is clear enough from what follows, and it is directly affirmed in ver. 13.

Unto, or for an inheritance, etc. The future glory for the attainment of which the chosen are regenerated, is metaphorically described as an inheritance, or patrimony ; and as such given only to God's children. This inheritance is *incorruptible*, incapable of decay, or everlasting in duration ; *undefiled*, not polluted with the touch of sinners, or perfectly holy in its nature ; *and unfading*, not like farms, vineyards, fruits, or flowers, smitten with a burning wind, but like lands where winter never " lingers in the lap of May ; " an inheritance the joys of which are ever new, fresh, and delightful. *Kept in heaven for you, who are guarded in God's power through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*. Heaven is not the inheritance here spoken of, but the place or bank in which it is *kept* ; kept there in the hand of God—*i.e.*, as precious property most securely, out of the reach of your deadliest foes. It is an inheritance, or patrimony, kept *for you*, the regenerated and rightful heirs, *who are guarded in God's power*, like persons in an impregnable fortress, *through faith*—that is, faith in Christ, ver. 8, by which we enter and remain in the fortress of God's power. And thus are they guarded *for salvation*, or complete deliverance from all evils ; *salvation* being the Apostle's explanation of the inheritance before described. This salvation is *to be revealed*, disclosed or manifested, like precious treasure when the covering or lid of the casket is removed.

And it is *ready* to be revealed ; every thing being pre-

pared on the part of God in reference to the bestowal of that salvation, or incomparable inheritance. But when shall God's children and heirs possess it? *In the last time—i.e., at the revelation, or appearing, of Jesus Christ, vs. 7, 13.* The last time is the final period of the present dispensation, Mat. 28 : 20, when Christ personally appears, Mat. 24 : 3, 14, and reveals His glory, 1 Pet. 4 : 13. (If any ask where this inheritance or salvation is to be enjoyed, the Apostle's answer may be found in his second epistle, 3 : 13.)

“Peter,” says Calvin, “calls the day of judgment the last time, because the restoration of all things is not to be hoped for before. He reminds us that the salvation is not put off because it is not ready, but because the proper time of revelation has not yet come.”

From this context it appears that *the chosen* alone are regenerated ; that *the ends for which* they are renewed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ are, that they may have a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ; that they may obtain complete deliverance from all evils, the possession and enjoyment of an incomparable patrimony or treasure, kept in heaven for them as in the hand or bank of God ; that they themselves are guarded in God's power through faith for this salvation, or are renewed in order to persevere in this manner, amidst all difficulties and enemies, until they obtain it, at the close of this dispensation, or at the appearing of Christ in glory. We also learn that *the source* of these unspeakable blessings must be sought for, not in man, but in the abundant mercy of God alone, and therefore that He is worthy of the highest adoration and praise. So naturally and always, *gratitude*, one of the holiest forms of love, moves in the heart and on the lips or pen of the regenerated.

Since the prejudices of education are wonderfully great, permit us to add that Heaven, the temporary home of disembodied saints, of saints half-saved, is not the place where the inheritance or salvation here spoken of is to be revealed ; but where it is *kept to be revealed on earth*,

when Christ appears the second time for the complete salvation of the renewed.

The metaphors in this context are very bold and beautiful, and at the same time perspicuous, or easily explicated.

⁶ Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations : ⁷ that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ : ⁸ whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory : ⁹ receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

A description of the great joy of the disciples, proceeding from an anticipation of the future results of their trials, and from a consciousness of their faith in and love to Jesus Christ. *Wherein*, lit. *in which* = *on which account*, or *wherefore*, as in 4 : 4 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 9, referring to the preceding context : Ye have been renewed to obtain a living hope, an incomparable inheritance, and are guarded in God's power through faith for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time ; in which matter, or on which account, *ye exult*. So the connection with the foregoing context is natural and obvious. Not, *in which* time, or in which last time ; for then the verb would have been in the future tense. And that Peter here uses it, not in the imperative mood, but in the present indicative, is evident from the present participles connected with it in vs. 8, 9. In whom *believing*, ye exult (ye rejoice greatly) with joy unspeakable, etc., *receiving* the end, etc. Moreover, the Apostle, in vs. 1-12, is engaged in portraying the privileges of the chosen ; the exhortations beginning at the thirteenth verse, and not before.

The main thought is : Ye exult that the proof of your faith will be openly seen to end in the most distinguished commendation and honor at the appearing of Jesus Christ. The other clauses are parenthetical, or explain in what condition and circumstances they thus exult. *On which*

account ye rejoice greatly (for a little now, if it is needful, grieved amidst various trials,) *that the proof of your faith* (much more precious than of gold that perisheth, yet is proved by fire,) *must be found ending in praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Their exceeding joy, even in or amidst various trials, is traced up to three sources. (1.) That the regenerated are the chosen of God, and are renewed for all the ends before stated. (2.) That the choice or purpose of God as to these things shall stand, or can never be frustrated : implied in *wherefore*. (3.) That they were indeed regenerated, and knew it, being conscious of their faith in and love to Jesus Christ ; and hence were waiting, with a living hope, for the promised praise and honor and glory.

The proof of your faith : see notes on Jas. 1 : 3. *A little now*, as contrasted with the *eternal* glory to be obtained in Christ Jesus, 5 : 10 ; or *just now a little*, momentary light afflictions opposed to the eternal weight of glory. 2 Cor. 4 : 17. *If it is needful* ; if with the indicative, taking the fact for granted ; needful to train and discipline you for the glory that is coming. *Grieved in various trials*, made sad in the midst of them, or in consequence of such trials. *Much more precious*, etc. Thus the Apostle indicates that faith is *imperishable* ; and he is the only apostle that calls faith in Christ *precious* : 2 Eph. 1 : 1. *Must be found* (see notes below), or will certainly be discovered. *Unto praise*, etc., = *leading to*, or *ending in* ; as in 1 : 2, 22. *In the revelation of Jesus Christ*—i.e., at or in the time of that revelation ; when He takes away the veil or covering which now hides Him from our eyes ; hence it is = at His parousia, 2 Eph. 1 : 16 ; 3 : 4, or personal appearing : cf. the Greek, 1 Cor. 1 : 7 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 7 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 13 ; 4 : 13 ; and the cognate verb, Lk. 17 : 30. (Cf. notes on Jas. 5 : 7.)

Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though just now ye see Him not (however much ye desire it), *yet believing, ye exult with joy unspeakable and glorified ; receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.* The Apostle takes it

for granted that most of those addressed had never seen the Saviour ; never looked on His face beaming with love ; never heard the inimitable tones of that voice which uttered so many words of grace : yet He was the great object of their love. Jno. 20 : 29. By the use of the subjective negative, however, the Apostle intimates that they longed for His appearing. 2 Tim. 4 : 8. *Glorified joy* is joy akin to that which the renewed will have when Christ unveils His glory, 4 : 13. *Receiving*, in this love and joy arising from your faith in Christ, in this "sanctification of the Spirit," this begun and progressive *salvation of your souls*, the seal and earnest of the future consummation of your faith : becoming thus "partakers of the glory about to be revealed," 5 : 1. *The end* of your faith, the ultimate result or consummation, by metonymy, for the seal, earnest, or first fruits of it. Cf. Rom. 8 : 23 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 21, 22 ; 5 : 5.

At the revelation of Jesus Christ the present afflictions and sorrows of the renewed will end in praise and honor and glory. The commendation of Jesus, Mat. 25 : 21, of angels, of their glorified brethren, of the sanctified nations, will stir up no pride then : far from it, but they will bear their blushing honors thick upon them, the honor of being kings and priests unto God, and the glory belonging to the coregents of Christ. 5 : 4 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 11, with Rev. 1 : 6 ; 5 : 9, 10 ; 20 : 4-6. (Cf. notes on Jas. 2 : 5.) And if we have an indubitable consciousness of our faith in and love to Jesus Christ, and are firmly persuaded that God has regenerated us for all the gracious ends set forth in this and the preceding context, then we, like the primitive disciples, should rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorified.

6. A B S ye greatly rejoice (ye exult), *agalliassthe* ; vg ye will exult, syr ye will rejoice forever, but these evidently are explanations, not translations ; as Thph Oec say : "*agalliassthe* is taken either for the future, or the present." (Tischendorf in loc.) But *agalliassthe* is not *agalliasesthe*. A C K L if it is needful, B S omit is. *Temptations* or trials : see notes on Jas. 1 : 2. *Manifold* : primarily, many-colored, but in usage = *various*. 7. *Hina* is telic, not ecclatic, since the result is indi-

cated by *eis* = ending in : Ye exult inasmuch as ye know that God intends (3-5 vs.) the proving of your faith by trials to result in praise, honor and glory, when Christ appears. *Hina heurethē* : *hina* with the subjunctive, when preceded by the present as here, or by the imperative as in 4 : 13, relates to a designed result which the writer assumes is to take place ; the future actual occurrence of what is objectively possible. Hence the verb should be rendered *must be found*, or *will be discovered*. (Winer, § 41.) 8. Having not seen, *ouk idontes*, B C S syr vg ; not knowing, *ouk eidotes*, A K L cop Thph Oec. In *just now not seeing*, the negative is subjective, *mē*. And Steiger says well : *ouk* denies as to the historical fact, " having *not* seen ;" " though now ye see him *not*," *mē*, as to the subjective sense of want, or desire of the heart. In English the distinction can only be expressed by a paraphrase, as above indicated. 9. Dickson and Lillie agree in the main with our interpretation of this verse. To make *the end* = prize or crown, is forced, and it cannot be justified by referring to 5 : 4 ; for there we have " the crown of glory." *Receiving* ; it is the present participle, preceded by verbs in the present tense, " ye love," " ye exult." In 2 Pet. 2 : 13, there is a future participle from the same verb, preceded by the future tense. Some explain *souls* here by synecdoche as = persons or men in their complete nature, and *the salvation of your souls* as = your personal salvation. But that is to make the Apostle say that we receive now in our complete nature what we will obtain only at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹⁰ Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you : ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. ¹² Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven ; which things the angels desire to look into.

A confirmation of the greatness and certainty of their salvation in Christ. The prophets, who were first employed by the Spirit of Christ to reveal that salvation, were most diligent students of it. *Concerning which salvation prophets diligently sought and searched, who prophesied concerning the grace destined for you.*

Concerning which salvation, the salvation portrayed in the preceding context, salvation in its divine source, its begin-

ning and progress in the human soul, its procuring cause, and especially in its consummation at the revelation of Jesus Christ. About this salvation *prophets diligently sought and searched*; by careful meditation they endeavored to understand it, as miners seek and search for silver and gold. Prov. 2 : 4. *Who prophesied concerning the grace destined for you*; who as Messiah's spokesmen foretold the gratuitous salvation designed to be bestowed on you, the chosen, redeemed, sanctified and guarded; you who believe in, love, and exult in Jesus the Christ. *Grace* describes the before-mentioned salvation as originating wholly from God's pure love: a metonymy of the cause for the effect; as also in 1 : 13, which confirms the interpretation just stated. (So also Estius and Gomarus.)

The general topic investigated by the ancient prophets was the salvation to be given to the regenerated through God's grace, at the revelation of Jesus the Messiah. The special topics of their diligent study follow: *Searching as to what or what manner of time*, as to the era and its characteristics, or, when he was to appear, and by what marks that time was distinguished or knowable. *Searching as to what (time) or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ in them signified*, showed or revealed (cf. Heb. 9 : 8; 1 Cor. 3 : 3; 2 Pet. 1 : 14, Gr.), or rather *was wont to signify, when it was testifying beforehand the sufferings destined for Christ, and the glories after these sufferings*: or, the glories that should follow. The special subjects of their study, then, related to the time of the Messiah's foretold and predestinated sufferings, and the subsequent glories, with the characteristic events of his humiliation and triumph.

To whom it was revealed that not to themselves, not to prophets of the Mosaic and preceding dispensations with their cotemporaries, *but to us*, apostles and disciples, living near the last time, 5 : 1, with 1 : 5; 4 : 7; Jas. 5 : 7, 8, at the margin of the great day when the Messiah is to be revealed, and full salvation obtained, *they were ministering* (like servants preparing a rich repast) *the very things which*

are now (in this dispensation) *again announced to you through them that preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven*: the same Spirit in prophets and apostles attesting the greatness and certainty of the complete salvation of the renewed, at the revelation of Jesus the Christ.

But even this is not all : *which things angels desire to look into*. So excellent and certain is the complete salvation of the renewed at the revelation of Jesus Christ, that all ranks and orders of angels are delighted and careful students of it. Our salvation through the sufferings of Christ, with all the glories that are to follow to Him, and to His people in Him and for His sake, 5 : 10, is a subject which justly excites the holy curiosity of angels and fixes their attention, in order that they may understand as much as possible of God's wisdom, grace and holiness, manifested in man's redemption. Lk. 15 : 10 ; Eph. 3 : 4-11 ; Rev. 5 : 11-13.

If the knowledge which we have of salvation was of merely human origin, the say-so of some gnostic or scientist, the speculation of some philosopher or school of philosophers, or a highly garnished poetical fable, then our hope of salvation, perfect and eternal, would be, not a living hope, but dead and worthless. But this salvation is made known to all that believe by prophets and apostles, men in and by whom the Spirit of Christ spake and wrote : the knowledge of it is derived from Him who cannot lie, who is Himself "the way, the truth and the life." "He cannot deny Himself," or act inconsistently with His perfections, and He Himself has promised us this salvation. Jno. 14 : 6 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 13. (See notes on the apostolic office, 1 : 1, and as to the prophets, on Jas. 5 : 10.) Cf. 2 Pet. 1 : 16-21 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 20, 21.

Prophets infallibly exhibited divine truth, but "inspiration is not omniscience," and hence the careful study of inspired men as to the salvation made known by them, or the time of its full manifestation, is not surprising ; but it is strange that uninspired men neglect to study the writings of Christ's prophets, and as sinful as strange. 2 Pet. 1 : 19.

The prophets certainly knew that the glories of the Messiah were to be after His sufferings, and that these sufferings were vicarious, or the procuring cause of men's salvation : Isa. 52 : 13-15, and 53d chapter ; Ps. 22. Also, that the Messiah would be God-Man. Isa. 9 : 6 ; Mic. 5 : 2 ; Zech. 13 : 7. But the fact of two advents of the Messiah seems not to have been made known to them by His Spirit, and hence they must have met with great difficulties in the study of their own inspired compositions. But for all that, their investigations were not vain, nor disregarded by the Most High, for it was revealed to them that the Messiah must suffer for man's redemption before the glories portrayed in their writings concerning Him could be accomplished. Besides, the hints given by the Spirit of Christ to the prophets concerning the gathering of an elect church from among Jews and Gentiles after the Messiah's advent, are very few ; and even the apostles did not understand that it would occur between the first and second advent, until after the Day of Pentecost, when they preached the gospel by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. (Compare what James says in the Apostolic Council, Acts 15 : 13-18, and Paul in Rom. 9 : 24-33.)

The glories of Christ after His sufferings foretold by the prophets, and the same things again declared by the apostles, relate not only to His resurrection and ascension, Ps. 16, but also and chiefly to His personal reign on earth, which is to begin at His second coming, and continue forever, and result in the restoration of all things in this sin-cursed world. Cf. Isa. 9 : 6, 7 ; Acts 2 : 30 ; 3 : 19-21 ; Rev. 11 : 15, and notes on Jas. 2 : 5.

If inquiries as to the consummation of our salvation at Christ's coming, the time of it with its characteristic events, absorb the attention to the exclusion of present duty ; if we attempt to go beyond that which the Father hath of right reserved unto Himself ; then they are not allowable, but otherwise, they are. Acts 1 : 6-8, with Mic. 4.

The Spirit of Christ in them : Peter takes it for granted

that Christ existed before His incarnation ; for how else could His Spirit have been in the prophets ? He also assumes that Christ is Jehovah ; for everywhere in the Old Testament the Spirit that was in the prophets is called *the Spirit of Jehovah* : cf. 2 Pet. I : 21 ; 2 Sam. 23 : 2. “ The Spirit of Jehovah spake in me, and His word on my tongue.” He also assumes that the Spirit is eternal, or Jehovah. Cf. 2 Sam. 23 : 3.

12. K syr cop Thph Oec to us, A B C L S vg to you : A B vg Did Cyril by the Holy Spirit, C K L S syr cop Thph Oec in the Holy Spirit : (meaning wholly under the influence of the Spirit, as in Rev. I : 10.) *Look into* : see on Jas. I : 25. There is no allusion to the cherubim on the ark of the covenant in the most holy place, since it is not certain that they were made stooping, and even if they were, it remains to be proved that these cherubim represented angels. It is much more likely that they were symbols of human spirits in heaven. See D. N. Lord on Rev. 4 and 5, and II : 1.

Through them that preached the gospel to you, etc., alluding to Paul and his inspired assistants, such as Timothy and Silas (5 : 12). If Peter had preached in the five provinces, he would have written, *Through us*, etc.

¹³ Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end (marg. perfectly) for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Here begins the parenetic part of the epistle, which proceeds with fervor of spirit to its close. The first exhortation or duty enjoined, based on the preceding doctrinal exordium : Hope perfectly for complete gratuitous salvation at the second coming of Christ. *Wherefore with the loins of your mind girded and being sober, hope perfectly for*, or set your hope perfectly on, *the grace*, the complete salvation through God's grace (as in ver. 10) *that is to be brought to you*, to be taken out of the casket or bank in which it is now kept in heaven, ver. 4, and given to you as inestimable treasure, or put in your hands, *at the revelation of Jesus Christ—i.e.*, when He appears at the last time, or at His second personal coming, vs. 5, 7 ; 4 : 13 ; 5 : 1, 4.

The grace to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus

Christ, is complete and everlasting deliverance from all evils ; perfect salvation in soul and body, with praise and honor and glory. Cf. Phil. 3 : 20, 21 ; Col. 3 : 4 ; 1 Thes. 1 : 10 ; 3 : 13 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 7, 10 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 28 ; 3 : 2. To hope for this salvation is not only the privilege, but the duty of all the regenerated.

This hope should be perfectly exercised, or always cultivated, and to the highest possible degree. It should not be hindered by doubts arising from a feeble faith in the promises and predictions of Christ's prophets and apostles concerning it, Rom. 15 : 13, nor by inattention or a want of diligence in studying those promises and predictions, 2 Pet. 1 : 19 ; 3 : 2 ; but it should be upheld and strengthened by seeking and searching in that rich and inexhaustible mine, "the Word of Christ," and by a childlike and unwavering faith. Lit., *Having girded up the loins of your mind, being sober*, hope perfectly, etc. : in our idiom = with the loins of your mind girded, and being sober. Lk. 12 : 35, 36. These participial clauses show what must ever accompany a perfect hope, or tell us how believers hope perfectly for this grace. Because of the long-flowing garments worn at the East, the girdle is necessary to tuck up and tighten the dress, and so to facilitate active bodily exertion. Hence the phrase, *with the loins girded*, is used by substitution to denote readiness for active service. And *of the mind* is annexed, to indicate that the readiness meant pertains to the intellect and will : Hope perfectly for this grace, and at the same time hold yourselves ready to serve God and Christ with all your mental energies ; exerting to the full the strength of your intellect, and bracing the will, in any service to which you may be called. *Being sober*, or not mentally drunk ; never intoxicated with the wine of the ungodly ; never stupefied or maddened with the vain pursuits and pleasures of the world : and hence watchful, quick to discern and avoid temptations to a sinful, grovelling life. The metaphor relates especially to the heart or affections : not drunk with love to the world. Cf. 1 Thes. 5 : 8-10.

If any suppose that an idle, dreamy, and meddlesome life is consistent with this hope, *they* have not the loins of their mind girded, neither are they sober. Such are also pungently reproved by Paul, 2 Thes. 3 : 5-15.

The motive is implied in *wherefore* : since the salvation in which God's grace is to be eminently displayed is so excellent in itself, and so certain to be attained, 2-12, vs. Hope perfectly for it, inasmuch as it is not a fanatical or chimerical expectation, but one in all respects reasonable ; based, as it is, on your election by the Father, your redemption by the incarnate Son, and your sanctification by the Spirit, and guarded, as you are, in God's power through faith for this salvation.

It is altogether reasonable to hope perfectly for that which is the great end of your regeneration : and ye know that such is the fact in your case, from an indubitable consciousness of your faith, love and joy in Jesus Christ ; which are moreover the first fruits and earnest of the grace to be given you when He appears. Let this hope, then, be ever living in you (1 : 3 ; 3 : 15), and perfectly exerting its holy sway in your souls. I Jno. 3 : 3.

Hope on = hope for ; *epi* with the acc. designating the object, as in Acts 11 : 17 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 5. *To be brought*, lit. *being brought*—*i.e.*, soon to be given : as in Mat. 26 : 28. "The blood being shed," soon to be poured out. And so of the expression, "My body *being broken* for you." 1 Cor. 11 : 24.

¹⁴ As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance : ¹⁵ but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation ; ¹⁶ because it is written, Be ye holy ; for I am holy.

Behave in all respects as God's children. *As children of obedience* : as here is a logical particle = as is becoming. *Children* by regeneration, ver. 3. *Children of obedience* ; which is not a genitive of the adjunct, like an adjective in English = obedient children, but here a genitive both of the characteristic quality and of destination : children having a

most intimate connection with obedience, and chosen with a view to it, ver. 2. *Not conforming yourselves to the former lusts in your ignorance* (cf. Rom. 12 : 2 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 9), not acting in conformity with your former unholy desires when unrenewed ; not shaping your souls, or forming your character by those desires as the rule (1 Pet. 4 : 2), *but according to* (after the pattern of) *the Holy One that called you, be ye yourselves also holy in all your walk* (in your whole way of thinking, speaking, and acting) ; *because it is written*, etc. Lev. 11 : 44 ; 19 : 2. Take God as the highest pattern or model ; in all your walk imitate His holiness, or perfect moral purity. *In your ignorance* = in the time of your ignorance, Eph. 4 : 18, when ye were not regenerated ; opposed to the time of their effectual *calling* in the next and principal clause : cf. 2 : 9 ; 5 : 10.

The nature and extent of the obedience required. It is obedience to God arising from faith, 1 : 2 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 13 ; an obedience of the intellect, by which we receive as true whatever God has revealed in His word ; of the conscience and will, by which we strive to obey His commands, and patiently bear the cross that is put upon our backs ; of the heart or the affections, by which they are ever directed towards and fastened on God in Christ as the chief good. It consists, negatively, in the renunciation of former sins ; positively, in a growing likeness to God in our whole temper and conduct, in becoming "imitators of God as beloved children," in seeking to please Him well in all things.

Motives : This alone is becoming those who are His children, called by Him out of darkness into His wonderful light, and chosen to become obedient. Such have no longer the miserable excuse of ignorance, the ignorance characteristic of their unregenerate state. God has always required a growing likeness to Himself : *Ye shall be holy ; for I am holy*. This is written in the Law, in the Gospel, and in the moral code of the intelligent universe. How happy are they who can truly say : "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O

God ;" " My soul breaketh for the longing it hath to keep Thy righteous precepts at all times ;" " My soul followeth hard after Thee ;" and to add with a consciousness that it is no empty boasting : " Thy right hand upholdeth me."

14. *Children of obedience* : this, and many similar phrases, is used to express derivation and dependence, most intimate connection and relation ; like that of a child to its mother : children whose mother is obedience. So *children of the curse*, mean those who are as closely connected with the curse of the law, as children with their mother. 2 Pet. 2 : 14. The genitive in most of such phrases is best designated as that of the characteristic quality ; but the rhetorical beauty is lost, and the logical accuracy somewhat impaired, if we translate it as an adjective. Similar elliptical expressions often occur : as, " Ye are all sons of light and sons of the day : we are not *of the night*, nor *of darkness*." 1 Thes. 5 : 5. " Hereby we know that we are *of the truth*." 1 Jno. 3 : 19. " He that doeth sin is *of the devil*," 1 Jno. 3 : 8. " But to those that are *of self-seeking*," children of a selfish mercenary ambition. Rom. 2 : 8. " We do not deal as hucksters with the word of God, but as *of sincerity*, but as *of God*," etc.—*i.e.*, as is becoming children of sincerity, and children of God. 2 Cor. 2 : 17.

15. *Be holy*, lit. *become holy* ; intimating a constantly increasing likeness to God. *Conversation* = *walk* : note on Jas. 3 : 13.

16. A B C S vg (as in Lev. 1. c.) ye shall be holy, K L Thph Oec am as c. t.

The Holy One that called you (ver. 15), effectually called or regenerated you. Cf. 2 : 9, 5 : 10 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 9.

¹⁷ And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear : ¹⁸ forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as silver and gold*, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers ; ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot : ²⁰ who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you ; ²¹ who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory ; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Cultivate the most habitual and unfeigned reverence towards your God and Father : *And if ye call him Father* (ap-

parently alluding to the preface of the Lord's prayer) *who impartially judgeth according to each one's work, walk during the time of your sojourning in fear.* Walk and sojourning are metaphors. *To walk in fear*, is to act wholly under the influence of it, to be ever increasing in the exercise of that mental affection. *During the time of your sojourning*, while you live on earth as travellers in a foreign land ; in the world, but not of it.

The fear required is a childlike fear of God, or reverence mingled with love, a fear of displeasing Him by our sins ; not excluding a dread of His judgments, if at any time we become self-willed, and wander from the straight and narrow way in which our Father has commanded us to walk, 4 : 17 ; Ps. 85 : 8 ; 119 : 120. Thus this fear naturally leads to a holy diligence in counteracting "the plague of our own hearts," and thrusts out of the soul all improper fear of man, 3 : 14, 15. It does not bring forth despondency, but drives us by faith and prayer, with willing hearts and nimble feet, into the fortress of God's power, 1 : 5. It is the perfect opposite of that Pharaoh-like presumption, which says in the heart, if not with the lips, "Who is Jehovah that I should obey Him?" Ex. 5 : 2.

If ye call him Father who impartially judgeth, etc. The motives : If ye profess to be the children of God by regeneration, or daily call upon Him as your Father, then walk in fear. The highest reverence is due to Him from all his children. Remember, too, that your Father is no respecter of persons ; that He looks at the heart, the manner, and motive of a deed, and not to the face or outward circumstances of him that does it. His judgment, or judicial decision, as to your present state, and future destiny, is perfectly just and right ; for He judgeth according to each one's work. Since then your Father is perfectly just, and will not show any foolish favoritism among His own elect, walk in fear.

God not only judges of men's external actions from the internal disposition and motive, but with a glance of His

omniscient eye most accurately beholds their many and various actions as one work. Cf. Rev. 22 : 12.

The renewed indeed are not saved on account of their works, but they are judged according to them. And judgment in this world begins at the house of God, 4 : 17.

“Works,” says Luther, “are fruits and signs of faith, and God judges men according to such fruits which must certainly follow it, so that it shall be openly seen whether there is faith or unbelief in the heart.”

The next and principal motive is derived from the wonderful manner of their redemption. In urging this motive, the Apostle briefly describes the kind of deliverance meant ; the price or procuring cause of that redemption, or the manner in which it was attained ; designates the time when Christ, although known from eternity as the Redeemer, was manifested for them ; and in particular declares that their faith and hope in God were the gracious results of Christ’s work as Redeemer. Since ye know these great truths, walk during the time of your sojourning in fear ; in childlike adoring reverence.

Walk in fear, *knowing* (a causal participle = forasmuch as ye know) *that not with corruptible things, silver or gold, were ye redeemed from your vain walk handed down from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

To redeem is to deliver or release from bondage, imprisonment or death, by the payment of a price or ransom. (Lk. 24 : 21, with Acts 7 : 35.) Mat. 20 : 28 ; Tit. 2 : 14. When applied as here to the blood of Christ, it means to deliver us thereby from bondage to sin, Satan and the world ; for the kind of redemption is thus described : *ye were redeemed from your vain walk*, etc. *Walk*, as in 1 : 15, is = course of life, the whole method of thinking, speaking and acting : so also 2 : 12 ; 3 : 1, 2, 16 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 7 ; 3 : 11. This walk is characterized as *vain*—*i.e.*, useless and sinful, as in Jas. 1 : 26 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 20 ; cf. Tit. 3 : 9, and Acts 14 : 15. “Ye should turn from these *vanities*,” these

sinful and useless objects of worship. 1 Cor. 15 : 17. 'If Christ hath not risen, your faith is *vain* ;' on that supposition, wrong and of no profit. Also, as *handed down from your fathers*, hereditary, taught by tradition ; depending on merely human authority and custom, one blindly following another in error and sin. From this sinful and worthless course of life ye were redeemed, released like captives from prison and death, *not with corruptible things, silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ*. This is the price or ransom paid for your redemption ; the procuring cause of your present sanctification, or deliverance from your vain traditionally taught way of living.

Christ's blood shed for your redemption was *like that of a faultless and spotless lamb* ; or, He, perfectly sinless and holy, gave up His life to deliver you from your sins. Cf. 2 : 22-25 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 5 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21 ; Heb. 7 : 26-28.

The blood of Christ is called *precious*, or pre-eminently valuable, not simply because it is the blood of a sinless man, but because *Christ is the God-man* ; which Peter intimates in the next verse, where he takes for granted Christ's eternal existence with God and as God, as well as His manifestation in flesh for their redemption : *Foreknown, indeed, before the foundation of the world*, known from eternity to God as the Redeemer, *but manifested in the last times for you*, manifested in His human nature, that nature in which He shed His precious blood for your present and everlasting well being. And this was done *in the last times*, or rather, *in the last of the times—i.e.*, at the close of the Mosaic dispensation. Cf. Heb. 9 : 26, Gr. "But now once for all in the completion of the ages has He been manifested for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The Mosaic dispensation was itself the completion or consummation of the ages, or the last of the times that preceded it, and, when Christ's blood was shed as Redeemer, it was flowing gently and almost imperceptibly into the present Christian dispensation of God's grace. Heb. 1 : 1. So the dispensations come down to one another, or the ends of the

ages meet. · I Cor. 10 : 11, Gr. Manifested in the last of the times for you, *who through Him*, by virtue of His power as Redeemer in sanctifying you by His Spirit, *believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God*—i.e., who believe in God as reconciled to you in Christ, God having proved the acceptance of His work as Redeemer in your stead, and for your benefit, by raising Him from the dead and honoring Him in heaven, the gracious daily consequence of which is, that your faith and hope are in God as your God and Father in Christ. Cf. 1 : 3 ; 3 : 21, 22.

Redemption from a vain walk traditionally taught, or sanctification in heart and life, is the effect of Christ's blood, or the sacrifice of Himself for us. Indeed, "the sanctification of the Spirit" would have been unknown to us, if Christ had not bought us with His precious blood, and delivered us from the curse of the law. Gal. 3 : 13, 14 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 24, 25 ; Tit. 2 : 14.

The price was paid to God, as a satisfaction, or legal equivalent, to His justice, Heb. 9 : 14, paid by His own Son in our nature ; and hence of infinite sufficiency, and, to all that believe, of everlasting validity. 1 Jno. 1 : 7, 9 ; 4 : 9, 10 ; Heb. 10 : 12, 14 ; Rom. 8 : 34.

Reflection on the price paid for our deliverance from the love and dominion of sin, is the best means of drawing the heart to Christ, and of producing a healthy fear of God.

" Talk they of morals ! O Thou Bleeding Love,
The true morality is love of Thee."

How vain is that way of living by which we put fathers and forefathers in the place of God and Christ ! Such dig out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water, and what multitudes there are who weary themselves in letting down buckets into empty wells, and growing old in bringing nothing up ! How much better is it to listen to the gracious Redeemer ! (See Jno. 4 : 10, 14 ; Mat. 11 : 28-30.)

17. *If ye call Him Father*, etc. (if with the indic. assuming it as true), or, *if ye call upon as Father Him*, etc. *During the time*, the acc. of duration.

18. *Traditionally-taught* is the nearest English equivalent of *patro-paradotos*. Cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 21, Gr.

20. K L vg sah Oec Thph in the last times, as c. t.; A B C syr cop Cyril in the last of (*eschatou*) the times, which we prefer.

21. Polycarp C K L S most of the versions Oec Thph believe, as c. t.; A B vg *pistous* : *hōste* with the pres. inf. points to the constant result ; what daily occurs as an effect of their faith in God, the author of Christ's resurrection and glorification as their Redeemer.

Foreknown, 20 ver., only by implication = destined and loved as Redeemer : Mat. 3 : 17, 2 Pet. 1 : 17, Gr. *eudokesa* = *I delighted*—i.e., from eternity. Col. 1 : 13. *The Son of His love*.

Both Jews and Gentiles made void the law of God as severally known to them by their traditions ; and hence no argument can be drawn from ver. 18, as to the readers primarily addressed. Rom. 1 : 18 to 2 : 23.

²² Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently* : ²³ being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. ²⁴ For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away : ²⁵ but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Let your unfeigned brotherly love increase in fervor, or intensity : lit., and according to the readings now generally received : *Having purified your souls* (from your regeneration until now) *in the obedience of the truth* (in believing and obeying the Word of the Lord, or the Gospel preached to you) *unto brotherly love unfeigned*, leading to or ending in this love, *out of a pure heart love one another fervently* ; *having been begotten again*, or regenerated, *not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through God's living and abiding Word*. In the 24th verse the best reading is : *all its glory* ; referring to *all flesh* = every man in his natural or unregenerate state. *Because* (it is written) *all flesh*, etc. Isa. 40 : 6-8.

Characteristics of brotherly love as here stated. It is *unfeigned*, not a mere pretence, not a lip-love : it is a *pure* or

holy love, welling out of a sanctified heart. It begins at regeneration, when the soul is first purified, or cleansed from the unholy objects of its love, and increases as that purification goes on, in believing and obeying the Gospel. Acts 15 : 9 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 2, 14. It is a love, then, to the brothers in God's family, to the children of God as such : a holy instinct of regenerated souls, or pure Christian love. (Compare especially the first Epistle of John.) 2 : 17 ; 3 : 8 ; 5 : 9 ; Rom. 12 : 10, Gr. ; 2 Pet. 1 : 7.

Our duty as to the cultivation and manifestation of this love : *out of a pure heart love one another fervently ; or intensely.* Let it flow out of your purified souls, not in a cold, or lukewarm stream, but gushing out with fervor and earnestness. Let it be intense love ; raised to a high degree and ardent : stretch out the arms of the soul, and with a pure heart embrace one another. 4 : 8 ; cf. Lk. 22 : 44 ; Acts 12 : 5, Gr.

Motives : (1.) Cultivate and fervently manifest this love, for ye are brothers in a peculiar sense ; having been regenerated by God, through His Word as the instrument, and by the influence of His Spirit as the agent. (2.) By your regeneration in this manner, ye have become capable of exercising this intense love, and will be without excuse if ye do not ; for the incorruptible seed of God, through His Word, is living and abiding in you. (3.) This love is an invariable result of regeneration ; and if your love to the brethren be cold or lukewarm, how can you be certain that it is genuine, or that you are yourselves regenerated ? (4.) This Christian love is a love that will be everlasting and delightful, ever like flowers just opening and "glistening with dew ;" but the favor of unrenewed men, and all the honors and pleasures they may bestow, are like fallen flowers and withered grass ; soon and irrecoverably gone. As a poet of their own expresses it :

" But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts forever."

Cf. 1 Jno. 2 : 15-17 ; Ps. 103 : 15-18.

What the Apostle says in this context concerning regeneration, is exceedingly important. (1.) In regeneration *the seed of God*, the influence of the Spirit proceeding from Him, is infused into the human soul ; or a life thus originating from God, a holy disposition is given. Cf. Gr. I Jno. 3 : 9 ; Jno. I : 13 ; 3 : 8 ; 2 Pet. I : 4. (2.) This seed is infused into the soul *through God's Word*, as the instrument or medium of conferring it. God, indeed, renews us without our aid, but not, according to Peter, apart from His Word. (3.) When men are thus regenerated through God's Word, that Word in them is *living and abiding*, perpetually exciting to holy activity : divine influence and divine truth working together in the continued purification, or progressive sanctification, of the soul. (Peter is speaking of the regeneration of adults.)

This whole matter may be illustrated from what took place at the Day of Pentecost : about three thousand souls were regenerated, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through God's Word as proclaimed by Peter ; and these souls, when renewed, persevered in listening to apostolic instruction, in prayer, and in fervent brotherly love, as well as in other unequivocal manifestations of the holy life thus imparted to them.

It is clear that the doctrine of the total and final extinction of this holy life in the soul of believers, is inconsistent with, and contrary to apostolic teaching. On that hypothesis, the seed of God is corruptible, not incorruptible ; His Word a dying and transient thing in the soul, not living and abiding. Cf. I : 5 ; Jno. 10 : 27-30 ; I Pet. 5 : 10, 11.

As to the means of purifying the soul, Peter gives no useless precepts, like those who pretend to be his successors. He does not order us, for example, to submit to penances imposed by so-called priests, bishops, and popes ; to be shy of Holy Scripture, and ask prelates for permission to read and study it ; or to obey blind guides as if they were infallible. Very far from it. How then does Christ's Apostle

teach that souls are purified, so far as their own agency is concerned? *In obedience to the truth*, is his answer: by living and moving in the element of revealed truth, or by believing and obeying Christ, God's Word or Gospel.

22. K L Oec Thph through the Spirit, but A B C S syr cop vg omit: C K L S most of the versions Oec Thph out of a pure heart, A B omit pure. The perfect participles are causal: *having purified* = since ye have purified your souls, or made them chaste: and so of *having been regenerated* (ver. 23). *In the obedience of the truth*, in our idiom, in obeying the truth. *Unto*, as in vs. 2, 7. The metaphor is in the preposition: *out* of a pure heart, as from a fountain, let love intensely flow. Gomarus takes *ektenōs* metaphorically, supposing an allusion to a bow-string, or musical cord, stretched to the proper degree. It may not be amiss to add that *ektenōs* is found also in B S, Acts 12 : 5, but here only in c. t. See Sept. Joel 1 : 14.

23. K L syr vg Oec Thph forever, but A B C S cop Did Cyril omit. *Spora*, (here only in N. T.) seems to be = *sperma*, 1 Jno 3 : 9, which passage confirms the explanation above given. To make the seed and the Word the same thing is wholly untenable; for so the *ek* of origination or efficiency is confounded with the *dia* of instrumentality. Nor is it logical to suppose that efficient and instrumental causes are identical. See on Jas. 1 : 18. As to *spora*, see the passages cited or referred to in Liddell, and Scott, Bretschneider, and Robinson, s. v.

24. A B C K L syr cop vg all its glory; Sept all the glory of man; S all his glory. Lit., *Withered was the grass, and its flower fell off*; very quickly, the immediate consequence of Jehovah's breathing upon them, Isa. 40 : 7; the aorists indicating rapid succession, as in Jas. 1 : 11. *Flesh*, by synecdoche, for men considered as frail, mortal and depraved, as opposed to God's renewed and forgiven people. Isa. 40 : 1, 2; Isa. 40 : 6. "All flesh is grass, and all *its* grace," etc.—*i.e.*, the grace of all flesh, the favor of unrenewed men.

25. What Isaiah says of the Word of Jehovah is emphatically true of the Gospel, living and abiding in you; the instrumental cause of your present and perpetual sanctification. As to the efficient cause of an eternally increasing holiness. Cf. Rev. 22 : 1. Which by the Gospel *was preached to you*. Cf. 1 : 12.

CHAPTER II.

Synopsis of contents :

Their duties as God's children, or members of the Christian Church, continued :

1. Let the holy life given you at regeneration be nourished by the unadulterated gospel, 1-3.

2. A description of their privileges and duties as believers in Christ and chosen of God, contrasted with the condition of unbelievers, doomed to punishment for rejecting the Saviour, 4-10.

Duties and encouragements as members of the state and family :

1. A preliminary exhortation, 11, 12.

2. Obedience to magistrates, 13-17.

3. Duties of Christian slaves, 18-25.

¹ Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings ² as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby : ³ if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious,

The duty required : *As new born babes, long for the unadulterated milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.* The metaphorical expression, *unadulterated milk*, is explained by the adjunct, *of the Word* : I mean by such milk the Word of God, 1 : 22-25. The simile, suggested by the Apostle, fully stated : as infants instinctively crave the pure milk that is provided for their physical growth, so do ye earnestly desire to receive the sweet and wholesome truths of the Gospel, to grow thereby in holiness ; or, as most of the ancient manuscripts read : that ye may grow thereby *unto salvation*—*i.e.*, that the growth may be continued until it ends in

complete deliverance from moral and physical evil. Cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 18, with vs. 14, 15 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 3, 5, 9.

The manner of receiving instruction from the Word, or what is necessary for a right reception of it : *laying aside all malice*, etc. Cf. Jas. 1 : 21. The sins named are modifications of hatred, and opposed to the love which exists in the children of God, regenerated by Him through His Word. *Laying aside*, or utterly renouncing these sins, as ye would put off soiled, torn, or infected garments. *All malice*, any and every manifestation of it. Malice is a desire to injure others, which naturally leads to *guile*—i.e., deceit, or the veiling of the evil intention, and also to *hypocrisies*—i.e., dissimulations or false professions of holy motives. And if we desire to injure any, *envyings*, or heart-burnings on account of their superiority and prosperity necessarily follow, as well as *all evil speakings*, or every kind of detraction and slander. It is self-evident that no fostering of these sins is for a moment allowable, and that growth in holiness by the Word is impossible without growth in brotherly love.

The motives : Love alone is becoming the regenerated : implied in *therefore*, referring to 1 : 22-25. The next motive is stated in what follows : *if indeed*, as I take for granted, *ye tasted*, at your regeneration, *that the Lord is gracious* : tasted from the influence of the Spirit through God's Word. If indeed regenerated, then by faith ye experienced the unspeakable sweetness of Christ's love ; the love of Jehovah-Jesus : for Peter, without directly citing, makes use of so much of Ps. 34 : 8, as was suited to his purpose. *To taste* is to know by experience. He who eats a ripe mellow peach knows full well how delicious it is, though the precise flavor of the peach cannot be described in words ; and so it is with the renewed as to the sweetness of Christ's love, or of God's love in Him. Cf. 1 Jno. 4 : 9, 10.

Luther, in his peculiar style, explains the metaphor well : " When I believe with my heart that Christ has given Himself for me, and has become my own, and my sin and misery are His, and His life also is mine," then I taste that the Lord

is gracious. "They taste it best who lie in the straits of death, or whom an evil conscience oppresses. But that hardened class who live in their own holiness, build on their own works, and feel not their sin and misery, they taste it not."

Growth in holiness may be discerned from its manifested effects, since such growth is an increase of the graces of the Spirit put into the soul at regeneration. He, for example, grows in grace whose hope of final salvation, moral conformity to God, fear of Him as a father and impartial judge, and whose brotherly love, as Peter has before described them, become more lively and vigorous ; and so of all other virtues characteristic of God's children.

The unadulterated Word of God is alone adapted to promote this growth. If mixed with error of any kind, its power as a means of grace is impaired, and when it is drugged with vain and deceitful philosophy, traditions and commandments of men, it is another gospel, and they who partake of it become morally sick and miserable, and often pine away and die from the poison they receive. We must long for and take in the pure Word of God, for we can only grow thereby unto salvation.

Holy Scripture should be studied, not simply for the discipline of our intellect, not for the sake of promoting our temporal emolument, and other similar motives, but in order to grow in holiness. And so we must and will most gladly hear and study it, if indeed we have tasted that our Lord is gracious.

The most advanced Christian needs the pure milk of the Word daily ; for what is the life of the holiest here but an infancy, when compared with their future sinless and glorified condition ! I Cor. 13 : 10-12.

They who persist in cherishing malice and all uncharitableness, grow indeed, but in likeness to Satan, whose children they are. What a contrast to those who walk in love, who are imitators of God as beloved children !

2. L Oec that ye may grow thereby, A B C K S syr add unto salva-

tion : *to logikon adolon gala* = the unadulterated milk of the Word : *logikon* = of or belonging to the Word, described in 1 : 22-25, as the truth, God's living and abiding Word, the Word of the Lord or the Gospel that was preached to you. *Adolon*, guileless, when applied to things means not adulterated, pure or unmixed. Cf. 2 Cor. 4 : 2, Gr. Some render, the rational guileless milk, which can hardly be justified by appealing to Rom. 12 : 2. *Sincere*, in Eng. Vers., is = pure.

3. C K L *eiper* = if so be, if indeed, A B S syr *ei* = if.

In 1 Cor. 3 : 2, Heb. 5 : 12, 13, milk, in opposition to solid food, means the elements of Gospel instruction ; but there is no such contrast here, and Peter uses the word to denote Gospel instruction in general, that food which God has provided to nourish the life of the regenerated. Cf. Isa. 55 : 1, Ps. 119 : 103.

⁴ To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, ⁵ ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. ⁶ Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious : and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

In vs. 4-10, we have a description of their privileges and duties as believers in Christ and chosen of God, contrasted with the condition of unbelievers, doomed to punishment for rejecting the Saviour.

In this paragraph their privileges and duty as believers in Christ are portrayed. *To whom coming*—i.e., the Lord mentioned in the immediately preceding clause ; Jehovah, Ps. 34 : 8. In this natural and artless way Peter recognizes the supreme Godhead of Christ. Coming to Jehovah-Jesus, by substitution, for faith in Him : cf. Jno. 5 : 40 ; 6 : 35, the present participle intimating daily or habitual acts of faith. To whom approaching, *the Living Stone* : the metaphor, Gen. 49 : 24, is explained by the adjunct *living*. In Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. 2 : 9. In Him is life, and He gives life. Jno. 1 : 4 ; 6 : 51 ; 10 : 28. Our life is hid with Christ in God. Col. 3 : 3. He is the true God, and Eternal Life. 1 Jno. 5 : 20. The Redeemer is like an immovable foundation stone full of life ; from

which your life as believers has been received, and by which it is ever supported. *Disallowed indeed by men, but with God chosen, honored.* Disapproved, rejected, or considered worthless by men generally, but in the judgment of God choice and highly esteemed. Cf. Acts 4 : 11. *Ye also* (as well as other believers), *as living stones*, holy and permanent like the Living Stone, *are built up* (by faith and love) *a spiritual house*, become like a house or temple in which God and Christ dwell by the Spirit : *a holy priesthood*, like a company of priests consecrated to the service of God ; and your office or duty is *to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*. These sacrifices of renewed souls include the consecration of themselves, with all they have and are, as voluntary oblations unto God ; the eucharistic offerings of those who have tasted the sweetness of God's love in Christ ; offered through Him, the Great High Priest of our profession, by virtue of whose sacrifice and intercession our services become acceptable to God. "For never," says Calvin, "will there be found in our sacrifices such purity, as to be in themselves acceptable to God ; never an entire and complete self-denial ; never so sincere a spirit of prayer as is becoming ; never do we apply ourselves so strenuously and ardently to righteous action, but that our works are still maimed and interwoven with many blemishes : yet Christ, notwithstanding, procures their acceptance."

A citation of Isa. 28 : 16 follows, in confirmation of what the Apostle has said of Christ and of the relation of believers to Him : *Behold, I lay in Zion*, etc. Jehovah's laying in Zion a chief corner stone, elect and honored, is used by substitution for establishing the Holy Messiah, especially in His office and work as Priest, as the only sure basis of faith and hope to men. Cf. Rom. 9 : 30-33. This foundation stone of the spiritual house was laid by God in Zion, not far from the gates of Jerusalem, when the sinless Messiah, the priest and victim, bore our sins in His own body on the tree, Heb. 13 : 12 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 24. It was a foundation stone laid in blood, the precious blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of

God, our legal representative and surety. 3 : 18 ; 1 Jno. 1 : 7 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21. Or, as Paul expresses it, *Whom God set forth on the cross a propitiatory sacrifice*, etc. Rom. 3 : 26. And hence it is that the Father gives the Spirit to men, and builds the spiritual house, or renews and sanctifies the chosen ; and all to His glory in their certain and great salvation. Cf. Gal. 3 : 13, 14.

And he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded, never put to shame : he will certainly obtain the complete salvation promised by Christ's prophets and apostles. That is sure to the believer in Christ, and to him alone ; with which agree all the legates of Christ—*e.g.*, Isaiah in this passage, and Paul in Rom. 3 : 26. *Whom God set forth a propitiatory sacrifice*, the benefits of which to be obtained *through faith in His blood*.

“ Rock of ages ! cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.
In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.”

Faith is a daily movement of the soul towards Christ ; a constant building, a lifting up and leaning, of the soul on Him. Unbelief consists in being shy of Christ, in moving the soul away from Him, in an unwillingness to come to Him, or to trust in Him as the only Redeemer and Mediator between God and men. But if Jesus Christ is not worthy of our highest confidence, in whom can we trust ?

The only Saviour, the one selected by God, and who therefore only has the right to save, rejected ! Rejected by men generally ! How sinfully strange ! What must angels, who look into these things, think of it ! What will unbelievers themselves hereafter think of it ? What awful warning does Christ Himself give concerning it ? Mat. 21 : 44.

The vital union of the renewed with Christ, is by the Spirit on His part, and by faith on theirs. Eph. 2 : 21, 22 ; 3 : 17 ; Rom. 8 : 9, 10 ; Gal. 2 : 20. This blessed union, this holy relation to and intimate connection with Christ, is here illustrated by beautiful metaphors. Christ, Jehovah

incarnate, full of holiness, is the Living Stone. We, by coming to Him daily, build up ourselves on Him, becoming more and more living stones like Him. So we grow into a holy temple in our Lord, and are like a house in which God dwells by His Spirit.

This union is mysterious. Our Lord Himself declares that it bears an analogy, or general likeness, to the indwelling of the persons of the Godhead. Jno. 17 : 11, 22, 23. It is, therefore, a union which is pre-eminently spiritual ; pertaining to the human spirit when regenerated by the Divine Spirit. 2 Pet. 1 : 4.

The union is indissoluble. " Because I live, ye shall live also." " I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." " Your life is hid with Christ in God."

The glorious effects of it will hereafter conspicuously appear. " When Christ, our life, is manifested, then shall we also with him be manifested in glory. Col. 3.

All the regenerated on earth not only constitute a spiritual house, but are like a great company of priests consecrated to serve God. The love of God and of Christ constraineth them to give themselves up wholly and always as free-will offerings, in order to obey and honor the Father, and to glorify the incarnate Son. Rom. 12 : 1, 2 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 14, 15. In this matter the holiest have indeed many reasons for penitent lamentation, but none for despair, for the sacrifices offered by renewed spirits are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Cf. 1 Jno. 2 : 1, 2 ; Ps. 51 : 17 ; Heb. 13 : 15, 16 ; Phil. 4 : 18.

5. *Oikodomeisthe*, indic. or imp. are built up, or, are building yourselves up, as in Eph. 2 : 22, which we prefer : others, build yourselves up ; leaving the sense unchanged. A B C S cop for a holy priesthood, *eis*, etc. ; K L vg Oec Thph as c. t. *Spiritual*, twice used, explains the metaphor following it. The comma, in Eng. Vers., after " sacrifices," should be erased. We connect thus : to offer through Jesus Christ sacrifices acceptable to God.

6. The citation is made according to the sense of the prophet, though it does not verbally agree with either the Hebrew or the Septuagint. The prophet says : *He that believeth will not be in haste*—i.e., will not

flee, like one who perceives a building sinking beneath his feet ; he will stand, assured that all is well for eternity. In other words, He will never be put to shame. *Periechei* is used impersonally = *there is a perioche* (section, paragraph or passage) in Scripture : see Acts 8 : 32.

Precious Peter expresses by *timios*, 1 : 7, 19 ; 2 Eph. 1 : 4 ; cf. 1 Cor. 3 : 12, but *entimos* is = had in honor, honored : as in Lk. 7 : 2, "who was honored by him," highly esteemed by his master, 14 : 8 ; "one more honored." Phil. 2 : 29. "Hold such in honor ;" let them be honored by you : and here, vs. 4, 6. (Not elsewhere in N. T.) Accordingly *the time*, in the next verse is best rendered *the honor*. Sept. 1. c. have not only *entimon* and *eclecton*, but also *polutele*. Cf. 1 Pet. 3 : 7. The 4th verse confirms this interpretation : *Disallowed—i.e.*, rejected and slighted by men, but with God *chosen, honored*.

⁷ Unto you therefore which believe *he is precious* : but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, ⁸ and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient : whereunto also they were appointed. ⁹ But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people ; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light : ¹⁰ which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God : which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Lit., *The honor, then, is to you that believe. Then* is not illative, but resumptive, referring to vs. 4-6. The honor, just now mentioned, of being a part of God's spiritual house, and a holy priesthood ; of constantly approaching and leaning on the immovable foundation stone laid by God in Zion, and so assured of eternal salvation ; *this honor belongs to you as believers*.

To you as believers in Christ there is honor indeed ; but to unbelievers, shame and everlasting contempt for rejecting Him ! *But to the disobedient*, (those who refuse to believe and obey, disregard the clearest evidence, rebels, or obstinate unbelievers ; for all this the Greek word includes :) *the stone which the builders disallowed, the same has become the head of the corner—i.e.*, Christ, notwithstanding He was rejected and despised by the leading men among the Jews, is in fact

the chief corner stone of the spiritual house, Acts 4 : 11 ; *and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence—i.e., the same stone which the builders rejected is to the disobedient, or obstinate unbelievers in general, like a projecting corner stone ; it is a stone against which they stumble, and a rock against which they dash themselves and fall. “ They overthrow not Christ, but themselves.” Who stumble against it, the stone of stumbling just mentioned, cf. Rom. 9 : 32, being disobedient to the Word, as in 3 : 1—i.e., the Gospel of God, 4 : 17, to which stumbling (collision, striking against Christ,) they were also set, or appointed. Cf. 1 Thes. 5 : 9. Being disobedient is a causal participle = because they are disobedient. Accordingly the sense is : Who, because they refuse to receive God’s testimony concerning His Son, the Redeemer, Jno. 6 : 29 ; 1 Jno. 5 : 9-12, strike against Him, the corner stone, or destroy themselves by their obstinate rejection of and opposition to Christ ; to which stumbling, self-destruction, or moral ruin, they were also appointed. This is the only honest interpretation of the Apostle’s words, which in our idiom should be rendered thus : This honor, then, belongs to you as believers ; but to the disobedient, the stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence ; who stumble against it, because disobeying the Word : to which they were also appointed.*

In this paragraph Peter alludes to Ps. 118 : 22 and Isa. 8 : 14, 15.

The obstinate unbelief of men and all the sins proceeding from it, are the proximate procuring causes of their ruin and condemnation.

Christ is the perfectly innocent occasion, not the cause of their destruction. But men’s opposition to Him is vain and deadly—dashing the head against the Eternal Rock.

If it be right for God to punish men for wilful persevering unbelief, and other sins that flow from it ; it cannot be wrong for Him to determine to do so. But it is right for God to leave obstinate unbelievers in the ruin which they bring

upon themselves. (1.) For unbelief is the great sin. Jno. 16 : 9. (2.) And it is the great sin, because God Himself attested the truth of all that Christ taught, and of His acceptance of all He did and suffered as the Redeemer, both by prophecy and miracles, and especially by raising Him from the dead. Surely, they who persist in rejecting a Saviour so attested are without excuse. (3.) The justice of such punishment appears also from the fact that the purpose of God makes no one a sinner. See notes on Jas. 1 : 13-15. (4.) Because unbelief springs from man's own evil heart—not from God or Christ.

That they who obstinately persist in rejecting Christ as the Saviour are appointed to this moral destruction, is evident not only from apostolical declarations, but also from the predictions of the ancient prophets concerning it—*e.g.*, Isa. 8 : 14, 15. For what are divine predictions but declarations and proofs of God's purpose?

But some object and say : Is not faith in Christ the gift of God? Eph. 2 : 8. And why is it not given to all who hear or read the Gospel? Mat. 11 : 25, 26 ; Rom. 9 : 18. Why has He appointed any of mankind to wrath, or punishment? 1 Thes. 5 : 9. We answer thus : Are you wiser than God? (See notes on 1 Pet. 1 : 2.) Are you holier than God? Can you with any show of reason suppose that the infinitely wise God makes any mistakes in selecting the objects of His mercy? Or, that the Holy One makes a sinful choice? It cannot be. Again : may not the punishment of obstinate unbelievers and rebels against God be necessary for the well-being of the intelligent universe? And if so, why is it not right to determine to punish them? If men can sin with impunity in this world, why not other intelligent beings in all other inhabited worlds? And is not the punishment of obstinate rebels in itself right? Besides, are you competent to decide whether the present mode of dispensing God's grace is or is not necessary for the manifestation of it in its exceeding riches to all mankind, in the ages or dispensations that are coming? Cf. Eph. 2 : 7, with vs. 4-6 ; 1 : 9, 10 ;

3 : 2-6 ; Rev. 21 : 24-26. Finally, Has God no right to choose from among rebels those whom He will pity and save ? Rom. 9 : 18. If you say, no ; then have your answer ready when you look in the face of Christ, if look you can, at the great day of His appearing. 1 Jno. 2 : 28.

Peter now applies the conditional promises given to Israel at Sinai, Ex. 19 : 3-6, to the converted Israelites addressed in this epistle ; not, however, to the exclusion of Gentile believers. And it is evident from a comparison with the fifth verse, that the predicates must be metaphorically taken. There their privileges are stated in order to point out their special duty to God and Christ as spiritual worshipers ; here, as publishers of God's excellencies to men. *

But ye are a chosen race, not appointed to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 : 2-5 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 9. Ye are like a race selected by God, and regenerated by Him ; the true nobility of earth, having within you the seed, the blood, the life of God. 1 : 23 ; Jno. 1 : 12, 13. *A royal priesthood* : chosen to act like kings and priests, to exercise your authority and influence for the benefit of mankind. *A holy nation* : like a multitude consecrated to God, and governed by His laws ; not disorganized, though scattered ; sacred to God and sanctified by His Spirit : a well-ordered holy community—God's republic. *A people for a possession*, like the private property of Jehovah, His peculiar treasure, dear to Him above all others : which is the meaning of the phrase, *a peculiar people*. So Paul speaks of "the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints." Eph. 1 : 18 ; cf. Tit. 2 : 14. What infinite condescension on the part of God ! What unspeakable love for Him so to esteem believers in Christ !

But this high dignity cannot exist apart from peculiar duty. Hence the Apostle states the design of God in so honoring believers : *that ye should tell abroad*, openly proclaim or widely celebrate, *the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light*. The excellencies of God are the powers of His mind, the perfections of His na-

ture ; the allusion here being more particularly to His omnipotence and grace. To call out of darkness, etc., by substitution for regeneration by the power of the Spirit through the Word ; by which men pass from a state of ignorance, sin and misery, into one of knowledge, holiness and joy : a change wonderful in its origin, and equally so in its nature and effects.

The great duty of believers as a chosen race, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, and the special property of God, is not to suppress what they have tasted of the sweetness of His love and power in Christ, but, according to their ability and opportunity, in their several places and stations, to proclaim openly by word and deed these and other perfections of God. So they will become instruments in God's hand in bringing others to Himself, that they too may behold the light of God's countenance beaming with love, or His glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ. Cf. 2 : 12 ; 3 : 1.

Who once not a people, not worthy of that name in your former unrenewed state, but now (since renewed) the people of God, etc. Two motives are here suggested to stimulate them in fulfilling the great end of their calling, in addition to those already indicated in the glorious titles given them. (1.) You should not be discouraged herein, for ye were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (2.) Gratitude for God's renewing mercy should and must incite you to publish the excellencies of Him who so loved you. Hos. 1 : 9, 10 ; 2 : 23, with 1 Tim. 1 : 13, 16.

7. *Time* is the subject ; if the predicate, the article would not have been used. *Apeithousi*, dat. incommodi, = to the disobedient, A K L most of the MSS. Oec Thph ; B C S syr vg to the unbelieving, *apis-tousi* : K L S *lithon*, A B *lithos* we prefer the former, Peter citing verbatim from the Sept. 8. S *apeithountes*, B *apistountes*. *To which they were also set, or appointed* : Steiger contends that the verb in N. T. refers only to Providential arrangements taking place in time, not to an eternal purpose ; but 1 Thes. 5 : 9, Acts 13 : 47, show that his position is untenable. Cf. Acts 13 : 48, Gr. And so does the same verb in ver. 6 : Behold, I *lay* in Zion, etc.—*i.e.*, I intend to do so ; or such is My purpose.

Cf. Rom. 4 : 17, with Gen. 17 : 5. Besides, whatever God effects, or permits to be done, now and here, is in consequence of His eternal purpose. And it will perplex the wisest heads to prove that there can be an election of some, without the rejection of others. Come what will, let us believe God, and never twist His Word, for that abideth forever, but all philosophies of religion disappear, like bubbles, with a breath. 9. *Laos eis peripoiesin*, a people considered as an acquisition = a people for a possession ; a people belonging to God, His special treasure or property. See Heb. and Sept. Mal. 3 : 17. *Laos periousios*, id. Tit. 2 : 14 ; Heb. and Sept. Ex. 19 : 5. *Peculiaris*, belonging to one's private property or *peculium* ; especially as valuable, Heb. *Segullah* : see 1 Chron. 29 : 3 ; Eccl. 2 : 8 ; Deut. 7 : 6 ; 14 : 2 ; 26 : 18 ; Ps. 135 : 4. Not found elsewhere : Eng. Vers. "peculiar treasure," "special," "peculiar," "jewels," "mine own proper good." *A chosen race : genos* (not *genea*), see Sept. Isa. 43 : 20. *Excellencies, powers or manifested energies, aretas* ; see Sept. Isa. 43 : 21. Heb. *praise*, by metonymy for God's excellencies, or the manifestation of them, the proper object of praise to His people : cf. Isa. 42 : 8, where it is = to God's *glory*, the glory due to Him. 2 Pet. 1 : 3, 5 ; Phil. 4 : 8. Virtue in Eng. Vers. = power : Mk. 5 : 30. *To call* (and so to bring) *out of darkness*, etc. Cf. Rom. 4 : 17 ; (1 Pet. 1 : 15 ; 5 : 10.) Eph. 1 : 19, 20. Peter in this context describes believers in the mortal body, and living in the present Christian dispensation, as an elect society, the true nobles of earth, like priests and kings in rank, dignity and influence among the unrenowned ; but John speaks of the Elect as risen and glorified, priests of God and of Christ, and His coregents in blessing and governing mankind, then sanctified or the people of God, Rev. 20 : 6 ; 21 : 3 ; 24, etc. ; and that not only during the thousand years, but forever and ever. 22 : 5 ; cf. 5 : 9, 10 ; 1 : 5, 6, 10. Hosea certainly refers to the conversion of the ten tribes, yet future. But the general truth that underlies the prophet's prediction as to Israel, the Apostle rightly applies to those addressed ; since it is only by regeneration and faith in Christ that any become in heart and soul the people of God, and this in every instance is owing wholly and only to His mercy. Still, an implied general truth does not nullify a specific prediction. As to the eighth verse, we should notice that, according to Isaiah, the stone of stumbling is Jehovah of Hosts Himself ; according to Peter, it is Christ : another of those incidental but impressive proofs of the Supreme Godhead of our Lord.

¹¹ Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul ;
¹² having your conversation honest among the Gentiles : that, whereas (marg. wherein) they speak against you as

evil-doers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Endeavor to glorify God through Jesus Christ, by your consistent behavior among the Gentiles, who are prejudiced and malignant. Cf. 4 : 11 ; 3 : 1. By holy words and deeds make your slanderers ashamed, and so continue to publish the excellencies of Him who renewed you : ver. 9 ; 3 : 16. With this preliminary admonition and motive, the Apostle introduces the next topic, namely, their duties and encouragements as members of the state and family. 2 : 13 to 3 : 7.

Beloved, I exhort you, as sojourners and strangers, as is suitable to such, or like those temporarily dwelling in a land and travellers in it, *abstain from*, hold yourselves away from, *fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*. Cf. Jas. 4 : 1. Keep aloof from the inordinate indulgence of all bodily appetites : all the lusts that prevailed in your ignorance, 1 : 14, and in which the Gentiles among whom you live are now immersed. Cf. 4 : 2, 3 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 18. The motives enforcing the prohibition : (1.) Such abstinence is becoming the children of God, away from home, and among the polluted and ungodly. (2.) The inordinate indulgence of such appetites wars against the soul ; against its purity, its dignity, its well-being : for fleshly lusts tend in a peculiar manner to stupefy the conscience, so that men become more debased than the beasts which perish.

The pagans considered gluttony, drunkenness and lewdness as very trifling matters, hardly sins at all ; nay, sometimes, as proper acts of devotion to their so-called gods, 4 : 3, 4. The righteous living among such men are as Lot in Sodom, and need admonition. 2 Eph. 2 : 7, 8 ; Ps. 51 ; 2 Cor. 12 : 21.

Abstain from fleshly lusts, at the same time *having your walk among the Gentiles beautiful* (see on Jas. 3 : 13) : persevering in your virtuous behavior among them. Speak and act among the immoral and idolators as is becoming believers in Christ ; like a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a

holy nation, and God's own people. Know your rank, and behave in conformity with it. This is the positive form of the precept. The motive : *that, wherein they speak against you as evil-doers*, in that which they slander you as criminals, *they may, by your beautiful deeds which they shall behold, glorify God in a day of visitation*. Persevere in your holy walk among the Gentiles ; for even they must and will see something of its beauty, and that in the very thing they are accustomed to deride you as infamous ; especially after a careful beholding or inspection of your virtuous behavior. The logic of the life hits the conscience in the sorest place, and is unanswerable.

Persevere, for God may by His Spirit renew them, this being the time in which He so visits the Gentiles, to gather out of them a people for His name. Acts 15 : 14. And if renewed, they will cast away their idols, and glorify the only living and true God. Mat. 5 : 16.

They who care not what others say of them, and are not led thereby to more vigilance in duty, act perversely. Such, instead of guiding men to God, become stumbling-blocks in the way of their approach to Him.

How much better is to live down slanderous speeches, than to send back railing for defamation ! In the former way God is glorified, and man humbled ; in the other way, we only throw kindlings on a fire already blazing.

11. A C L syr cop Did abstain, B K S vg Thph Oec to abstain. *Fleshly lusts* : In Pauline usage *flesh* is often = the depraved disposition ; but this is not Peter's mode of expression. That disposition he designates by adjuncts : as, "*lusts in your ignorance*," "*the lusts of men*," of mere men—*i.e.*, unrenewed men. Here *fleshly lusts* are = bodily appetites. Cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 18 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 3. *Flesh* body : 1 Pet. 3 : 21 ; 4 : 2, 6 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 10. *As sojourners and strangers* (or, *foreigners*) : *as* is a logical particle = *as is becoming* ; and the nouns are not literally taken, as in the inscription of the epistle, but are metaphors. See Calvin in loc. In Sept these words are equivalents : or, if there is any difference, *paroikoi* is = sojourners, settlers, foreign residents ; and *parepidemoi* = travellers in a foreign land. There is another metaphor in the verb *war* : which, like soldiers, are aiming their blows against the health

and life of the soul. Cf. Jas. 4 : 1, 12. *By* the good works ; *ek* indicating the incidental cause, source, or means of conviction. Cf. Jas. 2 : 18, 21 ; 3 : 13. A K L *epopteusantes*, as c. t., = having beheld ; which is the same as "which they shall behold ;" after they have become inspectors or eye-witnesses of : B C S *epopteuontes* = beholding. *Wherein*, (not *whereas*,) as in 3 : 16, lit. *in which*, or *in what* ; in the charge which falls from their slanderous lips, viz., that ye are *evil-doers*, or criminals. Accordingly, we find Suetonius, in his life of Nero, speaking thus : "The Christians were punished : a sort of men of a new and mischievous superstition." And Tacitus (in his *An. lib. v. c. 44.*) says that the Christians were "hated for their crimes,"—*i.e.*, for their refusing to comply with the fashionable and abominable idolatry. And that learned pagan, in his ignorance of what he speaks against, describes Christianity as "a deadly superstition," and Christians as "criminals worthy of exemplary punishment." But it appears from his own account of the persecution, that Nero was the monster, and Christians the innocent victims of his fury. And Pliny, in his celebrated letter to Trajan, frankly acknowledges that, as men and as members of the state, the conduct of Christians in Pontus and Bithynia was unexceptionable.

In a day of *visitation* : by a metaphor, for God's kindness in regeneration. Cf. Ps. 106 : 4. It is a visitation of mercy ; a time in which God, by His Word and Spirit, manifests His gracious presence in enlightening and purifying the souls of men.

¹³ Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : whether it be to the king as supreme ; ¹⁴ or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. ¹⁵ For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men : ¹⁶ as free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

The nature and extent of the duty required : Obey magistrates, supreme and subordinate, as magistrates ; or in the legitimate exercise of their authority. Obey them as officers whose province it is to punish criminals and protect the virtuous. *Be subject therefore*—*i.e.*, in order to lead the Gentiles to glorify God, ver. 12, *to every human creation*, institution, or ordinance, to every magistrate of human appointment ; and, by implication, to every form of civil gov-

ernment devised of men ; *whether to a king as supreme, superior to other magistrates, or to governors, procurators, proconsuls, and other subordinate officers, as sent by him, etc.—i.e., by a king or emperor.*

The limitations of the duty suggested, or, when it ceases to be binding ; with a warning not to abuse that freedom : As free—that is, submit yourselves, or obey as free men—as exempt from the obligation to obey magistrates, when they interfere with your duties to God and Christ. (See Mat. 17 : 24-27, and the use of the word “free” as = exempt from obligation, in ver. 26. Peter could not have forgotten what is there recorded.) Cf. Rom. 7 : 3. In 2 Pet. 2 : 19, freedom means exemption from punishment ; but here, as the context shows, exemption from the obligation to obey magistrates in certain cases. You are not bound to do so, when they interfere with your religious belief and worship, and the peaceable proclamation of the Gospel. Cf. Acts 4 : 18-20 ; 5 : 17-20. Instead of giving up these inalienable rights, prepare yourselves for martyrdom, 4 : 1, 19. (2 Tim. 1 : 6-8 ; Rev. 1 : 9 ; 2 : 13 ; 12 : 17 ; 18 : 24.)

But since Jewish converts might still retain some of the leaven of their former views, or be inclined to think that like a royal priesthood they were not under obligation in other matters, and as members of the state, to obey Gentile or pagan rulers ; and since men of the world, accomplished hypocrites, creep into the holiest churches ; the Apostle adds the needful admonition : Obey as free ; *and not as having the freedom for a covering of wickedness*, like a veil to conceal treasonable or rebellious designs against the existing government, *but having, or holding it, as servants of God ; as is becoming His servants, whom to obey is the highest freedom.*

The motives : For the Lord's sake—i.e., the Lord Christ, as in 2 : 3 ; 3 : 15. (See notes on Jas. 2 : 1.) Obey rulers in the lawful exercise of their authority, from love and reverence to Him to whom all authority is given in heaven and on earth ; by whose providential arrangements all forms of

civil government exist, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice. Do it to please Him. Mat. 28 : 18 ; Prov. 8 : 15, 16.

Do it, because the avowed aim of all governments is to punish the evil-doers, and to protect the virtuous : the worst form of government, however imperfectly administered, being better than anarchy.

Be subject, *for so is the will of God, that ye, by doing well* (obeying magistrates in all lawful things), *muzzle the ignorance of the* before-mentioned *foolish men* ; the men who slander you as evil-doers : ver. 12. In our idiom = these foolish men. *Foolish* = ignorant, or prejudiced, and wicked. Honor God, and disarm their folly by your peaceable, quiet and virtuous life. Cf. Dan. 6 : 4-6. With this paragraph compare the other classic passage, Rom. 13 : 1-7.

“ While government is from God, the form of it is from man.”

Government of some kind is necessary even for sinless beings in all worlds. Although the host of heaven worships God, yet we also read of the principalities and authorities in the heavenly places. Neh. 9 : 6 ; Eph. 3 : 10. But if in those worlds some act as princes and are invested with authority, this fact unquestionably implies that they rule over others of less intellectual power and moral energy than themselves. Much more is civil government, with its laws and officers, necessary for depraved men. Our world would soon become a facsimile of hell, if the incorrigible were not thus restrained.

A Christian need not perplex himself about the various forms of civil government, monarchical, aristocratical, democratical, or mixed, and their comparative advantages or disadvantages ; nor is it needful for him to inquire into the manner in which existing rulers have obtained their dominion, whether by conquest, hereditary right, or election ; since obedience is due to them as magistrates, curbing the wild rage of the wicked, and giving security to the honest and obedient.

The obligation to obey human laws and rulers is based on the will or command of God, the Governor of the universe, and of Christ, His Co-regent. It does not originate from any social compact of men, real or supposed, as the primary source. And hence they who disobey magistrates, or disregard wholesome laws, sin against God and the Lord Christ, whose declared will it is that men live justly in civil society.

The sphere of magistrates extends not to the conscience of men, but to their external actions, and to those actions so far as they affect the commonwealth or state. Accordingly, it follows that magistrates, with their ecclesiastical helpers or advisers, have no right to impose by law a religion upon a people ; no right to prescribe a religious creed and forms of worship as morally binding on their subjects ; no right to punish them for rejecting a religion so imposed. This is an usurpation of the throne and rights of God, and of the prerogatives of Christ ; and they who receive their religion from magistrates and clergy as from the highest authority, " worship the beast and its image." •

The right of revolution is one that belongs to the people as men : but it is rarely to be exercised ; with wise forethought and preparation ; and only when their rights as men are utterly and perpetually disregarded by the rulers. Otherwise, revolutions tend to abridge political liberty, and make despots more stern, cruel, and oppressive. (See notes on Jas. 4 : 1.)

At the coming of our Lord, a Christocracy will be established on earth ; of all governments, the holiest and the best. But till then, the apostolic precept is, Submit yourselves to every human institution for His sake. Dan. 7 : 13, 14 ; Rev. 11 : 15 ; Rev. 21.

" Oh ! for a world in principle as chaste
As this is gross and selfish !
Come, then, and, added to thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
Thou who alone art worthy !"

Honor all ; love the brotherhood ; fear God ; honor the

king. Here, with the exception of the first precept, we have a brief recapitulation of duties before enforced.

Honor all. We are not to esteem men, or approve of their behavior, as transgressors of any righteous law, human or divine ; but Christians should honor all as men. For they have one Creator. Mal. 2 : 10. " Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" " We are His offspring." Acts 17 : 29. Because they all possess the same mental nature, rational, responsible and immortal ; originally made in the image of God, and but a little lower than the angels, the dim outlines of which are not yet wholly obliterated. Cf. Jas. 3 : 9. Because the Eternal Word assumed human nature into indissoluble union with His Godhead. Jno. 1 : 1, 2, 14 ; Col. 2 : 9 ; Heb. 2 : 14, 17, with 1 : 2, 3. Because men are not irreclaimable, like the fallen angels, but, while living on earth, capable of restoration to holiness by the Word and Spirit of God ; and of restoration to the Divine favor by faith in the vicarious obedience, death, and intercession of Christ. He died for men, not for angels ; He gives His Spirit to the children of Adam, not to the angels that sinned. 2 : 24 ; Heb. 2 : 16, Gr. ; 1 Jno. 2 : 2. Thus we see what is the true brotherhood of man, and the wonderful foundations on which it is built. And it is self-evident that they who thus honor men, will try to save their souls from death. Jas. 5 : 19, 20. Hence, too, our Apostle says : Add to brotherly love *charity*, or love to men as men ; kind practical regard for their present and eternal well-being. 2 Pet. 1 : 7.

13. K L vg Thph Oec therefore (*oun*), but A B C S Did omit, as Eng. Vers. Internal evidence is in favor of the former reading, the external evidence is against it. But either way, what is implied in *therefore* is expressed in vs. 11, 12. S is singular in omitting human. *Supreme*, here, superior to all other rulers ; in Rom. 13 : 1, superior to the ruled : so Lillie, correctly. 14. *Praise*, the opposite of punishment, is used by metonymy for recompense or protection, as in Rom. 13 : 3. The commendation of rulers is the security given to the peaceful and obedient ; which is praise by deeds. 15. *Doing well* ; a participle indicative of manner, explaining the *so*, or thus, preceding. *Muzzle*, a homely but forcible

metaphor, in sense = stop the mouth, or effectually silence. Tit. 1 : 11. 16. *As free* : Paul and Peter acted on this principle, as above explained ; and hence their blood, with that of thousands since, has been not only the seed of the church, but the germ of even civil liberty. The second *as* is logically connected with *having*, not with *covering*, which is a metaphor derived from a veil or cloak. The *not* is subjective : Obey as free, and not with a consciousness of having the freedom like a veil to hide a rebellious spirit.

17. *Honor* all : this is the *aorist imperative*, but the other verbs are in the *present imperative* ; the former imperative denoting an action that is either rapidly completed and transient, or viewed as occurring but once ; the latter, an action already begun and to be continued, or an action still going on, or to be frequently repeated. See Winer, § 43, 3, 4. (Still, this difference is sometimes not easily discerned, since a command, from the very nature of the case, supposes one present to read or hear it ; and a writer may use both forms of the imperative as a matter of taste. See Buttmann's Greek Gr. by Robinson, § 137, 5.) Here, *honor all* is not the general precept of which the others are branches, nor the general principle of the rest, for *fear God* is that precept or principle ; but the imperatives may be thus explained : Begin forthwith to honor all, and continue to love the brotherhood, to fear God, and to honor the king : thus summing up the last duty enjoined, and supposing that they had not begun, or that there was a great reluctance to obey the first precept : as, " *Take* (aor. imp.) *these things hence* ; away with them immediately, or forthwith execute my order ; *make not* (pres. imp.) *My Father's house a house of merchandise* ; do not continue that any longer. Jno. 2 : 16. See the many texts cited or referred to by Winer. While the usage of these imperatives as stated by Winer and others is unquestionable, still the principle on which this Greek idiom is based remains to be elucidated ; we, at least, have not seen a clear explanation of it.

¹⁸ Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear ; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. ¹⁹ For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. ²⁰ For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently ? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God. ²¹ For even hereunto were ye called : because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps : ²² who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth : ²³ who, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he

suffered, he threatened not ; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously : ²⁴ who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness : by whose stripes ye were healed. ²⁵ For ye were as sheep going astray ; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

The persons addressed are not hired servants, but slaves, and Christian slaves, ver. 25. The word is *oiketai*, which in classic Greek generally means *household slaves*, but sometimes it is = wives, children, and slaves, as in Xen. Cyr., 4, 2, 2. In the N. T. it means a slave of any kind, whether working in the house, or out of it, as will be perceived by examining all the other passages where it is found. Lk. 16 : 13 ; Acts 10 : 7 ; Rom. 14 : 4 ; cf. Sept. Gen. 9 : 25, 26 ; Ex. 5 : 15, 16. The Greek for *hired servants*, or hirelings, is either *misthotoi*, Mk. 1 : 20 ; Jno. 10 : 12, 13, or *misthioi*, Lk. 15 : 17, 19.

In the Roman Empire, men became slaves by being taken in war, by sale, by way of punishment, or by being born in a state of servitude. The masters under the Roman Government had an absolute power over their slaves : a legal right even to put them to death. And they were often punished with the greatest severity ; not only buffeted, but scourged, branded in the forehead, and crucified.

By the Roman law slaves could obtain their freedom in three ways : *Per censum* ; when a slave with his master's consent got his name inserted in the censor's roll ; or by being legally registered among citizens. *Per vindictam* ; when the master went with his slave to the proper officer, and signified his desire for the slave to become legally free ; which was done by the prætor's putting a rod on the slave's head, and declaring him free ; with other ceremonies. *Per testamentum* ; when a master gave his slaves their liberty by his will. (Adams' Rom. Antiq.) Si neque censu neque vindicta nec testamento liber factus est, non est liber. Gai. Dig., 4, 16, in Andrews' Lat. Lex. Paul alludes to the legal way of obtaining freedom, 1 Cor. 7 : 21. Magistrates and philos-

ophers attempted to defend the enslaving of men on the assumption that many were by nature far inferior to others in mental endowments, but superior in bodily strength ; and such, they inferred, were made to be the living tools and drudges of the more gifted. (Aristotle's Politics.)

Now how did the apostles act in these circumstances ? Precisely in the right way. For as the legates of Christ they were sent to preach the Gospel to mankind. They were not commissioned to act as revolutionists, or attempt by force of arms to destroy social evils, but to show what Christ requires of His disciples in every rank and condition, and under all forms of civil society. Hence the apostles did not require the relations of master and slave to be instantly broken up, when one or the other became a Christian, or when both were so, but powerfully enforced the duties incumbent on both. But it does not follow from this that they approved of slavery as then existing : " Art thou called being a slave ? care not for it : but if thou canst become free, use it rather." 1 Cor. 7 : 21.

Nature and extent of the duty required : lit., *submitting yourselves*, etc. Your duty, considered in general, is subjection or obedience to your masters, *tois despotaïs*. Obey them in every thing that is right and proper for masters to enjoin ; in every thing that does not interfere with your duties to God and Christ. The principal characteristic of the obedience : *in all fear* ; not with eye service as menpleasers, but with an obedience that is altogether respectful to them, and indicative of reverence for the authority of God. Cf. 3 : 2. And this respectful obedience must extend or be shown *not only to the good and gentle*, the kind and sweet-tempered, the benevolent and those disposed to overlook faults, *but also to the crooked* : by which metaphor cruel and revengeful masters are denoted. The obligation to perform your duty is not destroyed by the manifestations of their sinful disposition : their intractability cannot justify insolence or disobedience on your part.

The motives : lit., *For this is grace, if any one on account*

of conscience of God beareth up under griefs, suffering unjustly. The Apostle supposes unjust suffering on the part of any of those addressed ; patience in such sad circumstances ; speaks also of the internal cause or motive from which it originates and is sustained—namely, a conscientious regard to God's will in the matter. And of such suffering he says, *This is grace—i.e.,* pure kindness shown to the unworthy. He calls it grace, because it is a love akin to that of God's, and an effect of the gracious operation of His Spirit. If any slave, suffering wrongfully, patiently bears it from a regard to the authority of God, let him remember that this unfeigned kindness is an effect of Divine grace, and assimilates him to God, who is kind to the unthankful and unworthy. So we understand the first motive.

Grace is used by metonymy : the internal disposition for the manifestation of it. *Griefs* by the same trope, for unjust sufferings which cause sorrows ; grievances. *Conscience of God*, is the genitive of the object = toward God ; as "zeal of God," Rom. 10 : 2.

The second motive, with a further elucidation of the first : *For what kind of glory is it, if sinning and being buffeted, ye shall take it patiently ? But if, doing well and suffering, ye shall take it patiently, this is grace with God.* Obey even perverse masters, for there is no honor worthy of the name to be gained by disobedience to their lawful orders ; other slaves, themselves disobedient, may indeed commend you ; but what kind of a renown is that which arises from disobeying God ? But if, while rendering respectful obedience ye suffer unjust treatment and bear it patiently, this is a manifestation of grace even in the judgment of God. It is real kindness to the unworthy, and He approves of it as such.

The third motive : *For to this were ye called—i.e.,* chosen or appointed ; as in 3 : 9 ; cf. 1 Thes. 3 : 3. To this patient suffering for well-doing, out of a conscientious regard to God, ye in your place and station were appointed. It is not an accidental thing : ye were called by God to give this unequivocal evidence of grace.

The last and chief motive : *Because even Christ suffered for us, leaving us* (at His ascension) *an example*, etc. Obey as before described, because ye ought to imitate your Redeemer, and He intended the disposition He showed amidst the contradiction and malice of men as a model or picture of what He requires of you. *To follow Christ's footprints* is used by substitution for the most careful and exact imitation of His moral perfections. And no better example can be proposed : *who did no sin*, never committed a single transgression, *neither was guile found in His mouth*. Isa. 53 : 9. Satan tempted Him, but found no evil in His soul ; men, too, tried to entangle Him in His words, and to make Him speak unadvisedly with His lips, but failed ; no guile was ever discovered in His speech, pure truth only falling from His lips. *Who, being reviled, reviled not again* : the allusion is especially to the reproaches to which our Lord was subjected when *suffering*, or dying. (See how the verb is used, 3 : 18 ; 4 : 1, 15, 19 ; Lk. 24 : 26, 46 ; Acts 1 : 3.) "Aha, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. Others he saved, himself he cannot save. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Mk. 15 : 29, etc. "He has trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he delighteth in him." Mat. 27 : 43. So was He reviled whose whole life on earth was one continued manifestation of good will to men ; reviled, too, from a professed regard to the honor of God ; and yet He uttered in return not so much as one disparaging expression. What unfeigned philanthropy ! what wonderful patience ! what immaculate holiness ! When *suffering*, *He threatened not* : demoniacally mocked even while dying on the cross, yet not one word was heard indicative of a desire that evil might befall them. *But committed it to Him that judgeth righteously* : so the perfection of His faith in God is intimated. He left the whole matter in dispute between Him and His adversaries to God's de-

cision ; and this without a particle of malice : “ Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

“ Behold the awful portrait, and admire,
Nor stop at wonder ; imitate and live.”

The disposition which Christ exhibited while suffering for us, is not only an absolutely perfect model for our careful imitation, but we should ever remember the nature and design of those sufferings : *who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree*, etc. The tree or word, by metonymy, for the cross made of it. Acts 5 : 30 ; 10 : 39 ; 13 : 29. Here Peter clearly explains what he before briefly stated, ver. 21, *Christ suffered for us* ; not simply for an example, not simply for our benefit, but by *bearing our sins* as our legal substitute and expiatory victim. Many have suffered for the benefit of the Christian Church ; but did they bear our sins ? Christ *Himself*, the Sinless One, to the exclusion of all others, did so. 1 Cor. 1 : 13 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 5 ; Jno. 1 : 29. Who *Himself bore* our sins, etc. There is a metaphor in the verb ; in sense = our sins were like a burden which Christ bore. In *His body* ; which is used, not to exclude the anguish of His soul, but to keep up the consistency of the metaphor ; and by synecdoche for His human nature : it is a metaphor and synecdoche combined. He bore them when hanging *on the tree*, or dying on the altar of the cross.

To bear sin or iniquity is a phrase often used by Moses and the prophets, and one easily understood. *To bear one's own sins*, is to endure the punishment due to them : Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. Forty years shall ye bear your iniquities. Lev. 24 : 15 ; Num. 14 : 34.

To bear the sins of others, when applied to mere men, is to endure the punishment due to such transgressors, while partaking of their sins ; as in Num. 14 : 33 ; Lam. 5 : 7. Compare the threatening in the second commandment.

But when *Christ* is said *to bear our sins*, the case is different. The phrase indeed describes Him as enduring the punishment due to our sins ; but, as the adjuncts and con-

text show, in a peculiar manner : Who *Himself*, He alone, He *who did no sin, bore our sins*. And this was necessary ; for he who is himself a sinner cannot perfectly obey the law, or satisfy the justice of God, for others. Cf. 2 Cor. 5 : 21..

Sins, literally taken, are acts of a depraved mind, violations of God's law, personal characteristics ; and cannot in this sense be legally transferred to any who did not commit them : nor can they be morally transfused into another's soul. But the punishment due to them may be imputed to and endured by one perfectly sinless, with his own consent and God's approval : in a word, they were imputed to and endured by Christ, the God-man. And hence it is certain, that when Jehovah laid on Him the iniquity of us all, when He bore our sins, the word *sins* is used by metonymy for the punishment due to them : the thing itself for its inseparable adjunct, or invariable legal consequence. Isa. 53d chap.

Christ bore our sins in His human nature on the tree, with *His own consent and God's approval* : " Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O God," etc. Ps. 40 : 7-9 ; Heb. 10 : 5-10. " For this reason doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life to take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have a right to lay it down, and I have a right to take it again : this commandment I received from my Father." Jno. 10 : 17, 18. Christ as God had a perfect right to assume human nature into union with His Godhead, and as the God-man to lay down and retake His human life for man's redemption : and all this He did with delight, and with the approbation of God.

It thus appears that our redemption by the vicarious obedience of Christ unto death, was a perfectly just transaction. But the many attempts to illustrate its justice from human jurisprudence and acts of human governments must ever fail ; inasmuch as it is a fact absolutely unique, occurring but once, and in this rebel province of God's empire.

The design of Christ's vicarious death : *that we, removed*

from the sins, might live in righteousness. *Removed*, remote or freed, *from the sins—i.e.*, our sins which Christ bore, delivered from the condemnation or the punishment due to them, *might*, from supreme love and gratitude to our Redeemer, *live in righteousness*. The intention of Christ, then, in bearing our sins was twofold : (1.) To effect our complete acquittal from condemnation. (2.) To promote effectually our sanctification, or render our progress in holiness certain. Cf. 1 : 17-21 ; Gal. 3 : 13, 14.

Most beautifully and lovingly does the Apostle apply this great truth to Christian slaves : *by whose stripes ye were healed* ; which is a substitution for, By whose sufferings ye were justified and sanctified : healed, when ye believed in Him, from the guilt and dominion of sin. For faith is the finger of the soul, moved by the Holy Spirit, which takes the blood of Christ, and by it heals the stings and wounds of an accusing conscience. This faith also works by love to Christ, and this love gives wings to the soul as it moves in righteousness.

How different was it in your former unregenerate state ! *For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls* ; when unrenewed, ever wandering in error and sin, turning away from the Redeemer, but now brought back to Him, who is pre-eminently the kind ruler and guardian of your souls.

19. To render *charis* by "thankworthy" is decidedly forced. Dutch N. T., genade = grace. *Conscience toward God*, lit. consciousness of God—*i.e.*, of which He is the object ; moral consciousness, or a conscientious regard to God. Cf. 1 Cor. 8 : 7, Gr. 21. Christ suffered for us, leaving us, syr ; B vg Christ suffered for us, leaving you ; S the Christ died for you, leaving you. The second reading bears internal evidence of being genuine : Christ suffered for us (whether bond or free), leaving you (slaves) an example, etc. Lit., *leav-below*, in abitu ad Patrem : Bengel. 23. *Committed* it : some supply *Himself* ; others *His cause*, and the like. We follow Luther and the Dutch version. 24. *Bore* : *anēneg-ken*, lifted up and bore = *nasa* and *sabal* in Isaiah. Cf. Jno. 1 : 29, 1 Jno. 3 : 5. *Removed* ; while the burden was laid on Christ, it was taken away, or put a distance from us : *apogenomenoi*. Here only in N. T.

In Herodotus 2 : 136 ; Josephus, Ant. 5, 1 : 1, it means the departed, or those absent from the body ; the dead, not the dying. In Herod. 9 : 69, "*absent from the battle ;*" or, at a distance from it. Doddridge is right in referring the participial clause, not to sanctification, but to justification : the latter is an act once for all accomplished, indicated here by the aorist participle ; the former is a progressive work. And Christ's bearing our sins is the procuring cause of our living in righteousness : " Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, by "becoming a curse for us, . . . in order that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. 3 : 13, 14. See Fraser and Haldane on Rom. 6. A more literal translation of ver. 24, *In order that we, being at a distance with respect to the sins* (dative of reference), *might live in righteousness* : (dative of manner.) *Molops*, like the noun in Hebrew, is = scourging ; a part of " the chastisement of our peace," or the punishment from which our perfect blessedness originates.

CHAPTER III.

Synopsis of contents :

Duties of husbands and wives, 1-7.

Duties becoming them in every relation of life, not only to one another, but to revilers and the malicious, 8-13.

Their duties and encouragements as persecuted disciples, exposed to martyrdom, 14-22.

¹ Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands ; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives ; ² while they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. ³ whose adorning, let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel ; ⁴ but *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. ⁶ For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands ; ⁶ even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord : whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. ⁷ Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life ; that your prayers be not hindered.

Why did not Peter also admonish masters and children ? It may have been owing to the designed brevity of his epistle, and because it was sent by Silas, who as a prophet was fully competent to give any further explanations, or instructions desired : and also because the Apostle knew well that Paul had carefully and wisely enforced what he, for the sake of brevity, had omitted. Besides, ingenuous minds

(2 Ep. 3 : 1) might easily deduce what was necessary in these matters from the general precepts that follow in vs. 8-13.

Likewise—i.e., from a similar desire to be instrumental in leading others to glorify God, and to honor and imitate Christ : the reference being to 2 : 11-25. (Some suppose the reference is to vs. 11, 12 ; others, to ver. 17 ; others, to both passages : but it is more natural to suppose an allusion to the whole preceding context relating to government, political and domestic.) Thus in a single word the most powerful motives are suggested.

The duties required are obedience, reverence and chastity. They are to obey them as husbands, in the lawful exercise of their authority ; in all that conflicts not with their obligations to God and Christ ; and that whether the husbands are believers or unbelievers.

The great end to be had in view in performing their duties, and the means of attaining it : *In order that, even if some disobey the Word (2 : 8 ; 4 : 17) they may, by means of the walk (behavior) of the wives, without a word, be gained.* The Apostle supposes the worst case, or takes it for granted that some husbands of Christian wives refused to believe and obey the Gospel, and then says, Obey them, in order to promote their salvation. To be gained, implies a previous loss or destitution, but no longer existing. And hence, by a metaphor, that *they may be gained*, or won, is = that they may be saved ; gained for Christ. Cf. 1 Cor. 9 : 19-22 ; 7 : 16.

The proper means to be employed in such cases : *they beholding your chaste walk in fear.* To gain them for Christ and eternal glory in Him, not a word, no talk or disputation, is necessary on your part ; but let your submissive, chaste and reverent conduct speak for Christ. And do not expect that the desired result will instantly or speedily occur ; for it is only by beholding, or constantly and carefully inspecting, your holy way of living, that obstinate unbelievers can be gained.

The chastity mentioned is both bodily and mental (for what our Lord affirms of a man is equally true of a woman, Mat. 5 : 28) ; it is such purity as is becoming a wife that believes and obeys the Gospel of God. Cf. Tit. 2 : 4, 5. This purity must always be connected with fear, or reverence to the husband, arising from that reverence or supreme regard which is due to Christ. (Eph. 5 : 21, etc. ; Col. 3 : 18. In the former text, the best reading is : " in the fear of Christ.")

The husband is the chief ruler of the family ; so appointed by the law of God, and the law of nations : not the tyrant of the household, but the kind-hearted and provident ruler. Eph. 5 : 25, etc. The wings of a bird are no burden to it, but necessary to its activity and well-being ; and the submission of the wife to the authority of her husband is compatible with unfeigned love on the part of both, and even necessary for its healthy growth ; for how can the husband love, if the wife will not obey ?

If a woman endowed with much intellectual power consents to be yoked with a simpleton, whether poor or rich, she has no one to blame for the consequences that follow but herself. The same must be said of those pious women who consent to marry the sceptical and immoral, for the purpose of reforming them. But the end cannot sanctify the means ; and they should not pervert this context of the Apostle ; for he is not advising Christian women to marry obstinate unbelievers, in order to win them for Christ, but directing those wives whose conversion occurred after marriage, and whose husbands remained opposed to the Gospel, how they should act for that end in the circumstances in which they were placed.

But can adults be converted and saved apart from the Gospel ? Peter affirms the contrary, 1 : 22, 23. And here also ; for the right translation is, *without a word*, or, *without talk* ; there being no article in the original. Cf. Jas. 3 : 2 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 20 ; Mat. 22 : 15. And he is speaking, not of those who never heard the Gospel, but of those *that disobey the Word*, or refuse to believe and obey it.

But even Christian women might naturally ask : Are obedience and chastity combined with reverence our only duties ? Must we not also pay special attention to our dress ? The Apostle answers : *Let your characteristic be not the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, and the putting on of garments, but the hidden man of the heart, appearing in the incorruptible ornament of the meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God very costly.* Let your peculiar distinction as Christian wives be not that kind of dress which unholy women delight in, but let the beauty of your renewed disposition appear in meekness and quiet submission—than which no ornament can be more becoming. The Apostle takes it for granted that women are particularly anxious about their dress ; neither does he say that all such desire and attention on their part is sinful ; but he urges them especially to adorn the soul, and exhibit its holy attractions.

Slovenliness in dress, a studied carelessness and starched preciseness, are not commendable ; but any approximation to the dress and finery of impure and insolent women, is abominable. Isa. 3.

Curiously braided locks, whether of false or natural hair, even if sprinkled with gold dust, and interwoven with gems ; lily-like arms flashing with diamonds : daily and frequent change of dresses, whether for different meals, for private receptions, public promenades, operas, theatres and balls ; can such things garnish impure souls, or make moral ugliness beautiful ? The dress of the pious, on the contrary, will ever be neat and modest, as well as suitable to the station which they occupy, and the spirit that reigns within.

Motives : By cultivating and exhibiting a meek and quiet spirit, ye will glorify God and Christ : implied in “ likewise.” This also is superior to all other beauty, making you like Him who is meek and lowly in heart. It is an incorruptible ornament ; not perishable, as gold and silver ; not capable of decay, as the costliest bodily robes ; but like a diamond of eternal brilliancy, set in a dress of spotless white. Rev. 19 : 8, 14.

In God's eye it is a very costly or precious thing : He delighting in any and every manifestation of it. And if this form of holiness meets with the approbation of the High and Holy One, is not that enough to cheer the heart of Christian wives ?

The next motive follows : *For thus* (with this meek and quiet spirit) *in old time the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned* (were wont to adorn) *themselves*. And how did they show it ? By *being in subjection to their own husbands, as Sarah*, for instance, *obeyed Abraham, calling him lord* : always treating him with reverence ; her usual mode of address being indicative of her chaste walk in fear.

Whose children ye have become, if ye are doing well and are not afraid with any amazement : ye are her children—*i.e.*, like her in disposition, if ye persevere in well-doing as Christian wives, and are not afraid of any sudden terror from without ; for example, not frightened at the dark clouds of coming persecution, ver. 14, etc. Peter seems to allude to Prov. 3 : 25 and Gen. 18 : 15. Sarah, through sudden fear, spoke falsely to the Eternal Word. Peter hints that no equivocation or falsehood can be justified by the plea, I was frightened. Cf. vs. 14, 15. Sarah, although a holy woman, sinned in that particular. Ye should imitate her general, uniform walk, not an occasional misstep. *Children of Sarah*, by a metaphor, as just explained ; cf. Lk. 13 : 16, “ a daughter of Abraham ;” 19 : 9, “ a son of Abraham.” Gal. 3 : 29. “ But if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed,” (no matter whether Jew or Greek, bond or free, male or female, ver. 28,) like him in faith, as believers like the father of believers. *Amazement*, or fright, by metonymy, for the object that causes it.

What holy women have lived from the time of Sarah until now ! What faith and hope in God they have exhibited ! How obedient, pure and respectful ! With what a meek and quiet spirit adorned ! How modest in dress ! What bold perseverance in well-doing, though naturally timid ! What helpers even to apostles ! Rom. 16 : 1, 2 ; Phil.

4 : 3. Alas ! that just the opposite must be said of unholy women. " Woman is like the snow, the fairest thing we know when fair ; the foulest, when debased and polluted."

The seventh verse, as is now generally acknowledged, should be thus translated : Likewise, ye husbands, dwell according to knowledge with the wife as the weaker vessel, assigning them honor as also co-heirs of the grace of life ; that your prayers be not hindered.

Likewise : from a similar desire to glorify God and Christ in the discharge of your obligations, 3 : 1. Lit., *dwelling according to knowledge with the female as a weaker vessel*. Cf. Sept. Deut. 22 : 5. Live with the wife as husbands, intelligently and lovingly. Favor them with your presence, guidance, and holy friendship ; or act herein like intelligent Christian men. As is due to the weaker vessel ; one whose physical constitution is less robust, and whose sensibilities are easily wounded. Have a wise consideration of what is due to her as a woman, wife and mother : treat her as is suitable to the weaker human being God has provided as your companion and helper, for this life and a better. *Vessel*, in usage is = an instrument of any kind. Here, it is the same as a creature, or a human being made by God as the helper of men. Gen. 2 : 18 ; cf. Acts 9 : 15 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 7 ; Rom. 9 : 22, 23.

Giving them honor as being also co-heirs of the grace of life : esteeming them as believers or holy women, the objects of God's love as well as yourselves, and appointed to obtain eternal life in Christ, or all the grace to be given when He appears. 1 : 3-5, 13 ; 3 : 4, 5. In all which they are your equals. Gal. 3 : 28.

The motive enforcing both precepts : *that your prayers be not hindered*. Live intelligently and associate lovingly with your wives, made by God for promoting your happiness, and honor them also as Christians ; otherwise contentions will arise, and your prayers as married persons will either be prevented, or, if offered, be useless.

The Apostle takes it for granted that there is family wor-

ship in the houses of Christians. He considers that duty as one self-evident to regenerated minds. As a woman longs to discern unmistakable manifestations of love from her husband, her affections generally directing and overshadowing her intellectual powers, so a wise husband will carefully consider this peculiarity of his loving helper, and abstain from all harsh and bitter expressions.

The risen and glorified saints will neither marry nor be given in marriage, when Christ appears to reign on earth, Lk. 20 : 34-36 ; not so, however, with the holy who shall then live in the flesh, or in bodies not yet glorified. Isa. 65 : 23 ; Ps. 72 : 5 ; Ezek. 37 : 24, 25 ; Rev. 21 : 24 ; 22 : 14.

How delightful is that holy love and friendship which is everlasting, which grows in intensity and power, and which is illuminated by the hope of praise, honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ ! Then there will be no hindrance to prayer and adoration, and we, in our complete nature glorified, will obey any and every commandment of Christ on earth, with the same readiness, steadiness and exquisite joy as the angels now do in heaven. Mat. 6 : 10.

1. C K L Oec Thph *hai gunaikes*, B S omit the article : A L S vg *kai ei tines*, C K *ei kai tines* : A C K L S Oec Thph *kerdêthesontai* ; (B the same acc. to Tischendorf, but acc. to Mai it agrees with c. t.) See Winer, § 41, 1 b. A variation through Itacism. There is an elegant paranomasia in *logô*, *logou* : the latter is opposed to *walk* preceding. By your walk, without talk ; is the evident meaning.

2. S *epopteuontes*, B as c. t.

3. *Let your characteristic be*, (a common use of *einai* with the genitive) is the best rendering in our idiom.

4. Whether we take *aphthartô* as an adjective, or suppose it to be used as an abstract noun, the sense is the same. A C K L Did meek and quiet, B vg cop quiet and meek, S meek quiet. *Meek* is = mild and forgiving, the opposite of imperious or ambitious ; *quiet*, the opposite of noisy or contentious. Prov. 21 : 19.

5. A B C *eis*, K L S *epi*.

6. A C K L S *hupêkousen*, B *hupê-kouen*. By the former genuine reading her whole conduct as a wife is spoken of as one act of obedience.

7. If *tô gunaikeio* be used as an abstract noun, then it is = the wife ; if as an adjective, then "vessel" is understood ; the sense being the

same : we prefer the former. A K L *sunklēronomoi* = ye being heirs with them ; A B S vg syr Thph Oec have the noun in the dative, = to them who are heirs with you. A B S *egkoptesthai*, K L *ekkoptesthai* : either way, the metaphor is = impeded, hindered, or rendered useless. S is singular in the reading *sunomilountes*.

* Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another ; love as brethren, *be* pitiful, be courteous : ⁹ not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing : but contrariwise blessing ; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile : ¹¹ let him eschew evil, and do good ; let him seek peace, and ensue it. ¹² For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* to their prayers : but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. ¹³ And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ?

Duties that are suitable to Christ's disciples in every relation of life, not only to one another, but to revilers and the malicious without the pale of the church. *Finally*, lit. *But the end*—i.e., the conclusion of the exhortations concerning relative duties. The virtues I now commend are proper and necessary to be cultivated by you *all*, whether subjects or servants, married or unmarried.

Likeminded : whatever your condition and rank, mind one and the same thing—namely, that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in all you say, do, and suffer. 2 : 11, 12 ; 4 : 10, 11 ; Phil. 2 : 2, etc.

Sympathizing : having the same feelings with your brethren ; not only weeping with the sad, but rejoicing with the glad. Let the ice of selfishness, too often freezing the heart, melt and disappear. Share warmly in all the holy affections that stir the souls of your fellow-disciples, both in prosperity and adversity.

Be brother-lovers, or love as brethren. The repetition of the precept shows the importance of the duty. 1 : 22, etc ; 4 : 8. Although Christians are taught of God to love one

another, yet admonitions as to its continuance and growth are not needless. 1 Thes. 4 : 9, 10 ; Heb. 13 : 1.

Pitiful, or *tender-hearted*, as the word is rendered, Eph. 4 : 32. Be merciful to your brethren in distress, whether occasioned by bodily pain or mental difficulties. The parable of the good Samaritan teaches us also that this modification of love is due to any one that needs help, when it is in our power to aid him. Cf. Jas. 1 : 27 ; 3 : 17.

Courteous, or *friendly-minded*: not hollow-hearted compliments, but manifestations of a friendly spirit. Certainly a rough way of speaking and acting, but ill comports with "the gentleness of Christ." But the reading now generally received is *lowly-minded*. Take a low place before God, and do not lift yourselves above others in pride and self-conceit. Rom. 12 : 16 ; Mat. 5 : 3.

As to the malicious, *not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling*; not avenging yourselves, or not requiting those who injure you in word or deed with similar words and deeds: *not paying off* (as the word literally means) the devil's servants with their own coin, made and stamped in hell, *but on the contrary* be *blessing*, praying for their welfare. Thus throw revenge to the winds, and treat your revilers as Jesus treated His.

Motives : (1.) The general motive enforcing the preceding exhortations. *Knowing that to this ye were called, in order that ye might inherit a blessing—i.e.,* since ye know that ye were chosen by God to exercise this love and forbearance, to the end that by His grace (implied in "inherit") ye might become emphatically blessed. The best reading is: *Because to this*, etc.

God intends that His people shall be happy now and here, as well as hereafter, and effects it, not only amidst injuries and insults to the called, but by means of them: holy serenity of mind and peace of conscience is the blessing the loving inherit; but the disciples of Satan, the revilers of the holy, are self-tormentors, miserable in their seeming triumphs. For how can he be at ease whose heart is filled

with hatred and revenge? And how can he be wretched whose heart is a fountain of love and meekness?

The other motives are developments of the first. (2.) Prophets agree with us apostles in teaching that the cultivation of this loving and forgiving spirit is the right road to happiness: For (it is written, Ps. 34) *he that will love life*, is desirous of taking delight in living, (it is the opposite of "to hate life," Eccl. 2 : 17), *and see good days*, enjoy times of prosperity or happiness, *let him restrain* (make to cease) *his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking guile*, let him abstain from malicious and deceitful words; *let him turn away from evil, and do good*, wholly forsake malice and act with uniform kindness. And if *peace*, or a friendly feeling on the part of the wicked is not in this manner speedily obtained, then *seek* it, as a thing hidden and too valuable not to be found, *and chase it*, as hunters pursue a fleeing deer.

(3.) Jehovah is the friend of the loving and forbearing, esteeming them as the righteous, but He is the enemy of evil-doers, or the revilers and malicious: *for the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous*, the Omniscient Jehovah regards them who do right by returning good for evil as the objects of His love. *And His ears are turned to their prayer*, ever ready to give them the help they ask in order to overcome evil with good. *But the face of the Lord frowneth upon evil-doers*; He notices them also, but as the proper objects of wrath, or punishment.

(4.) The disposition and conduct before described generally tends to disarm the malice of men: *And who is he that will do evil to you, if ye are* (have become) *imitators of the good?* Who will do so, if your heart, words and deeds are full of grace, or kindness? In such circumstances, the persecutor, if not wholly malignant, will often become ashamed, and lay aside his poisoned arrows. (That this is not always to be expected is evident from what follows, ver. 14, etc.)

To live in peace with some men is almost impossible.

Rom. 12 : 18. They are gruff, snappish and implacable, like polar bears. If, however, they cannot be conquered by persevering demonstrations of good will—their blood will be on their own heads as they go to their own place, to herd forever with the malignants of the universe. Acts 1 : 25 ; Mat. 25 : 41, 46 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 5-9.

Would you be happy, even when lashed by scoffing tongues? Speak and act with truth and kindness, pray for your revilers, try perseveringly to overcome evil with good, and then you will inherit a blessing, even a peace that comes from God, and like that of God. Phil. 4 : 7.

If you are exposed to railing, while you are walking in love and because of it, then know that the Omniscient Jehovah looks on you with approbation, and that no prayer for help in the difficult work of returning good for evil will be by Him unheeded. So you will obtain and retain the Spirit of Glory and of God, 4 : 14 ; and how that Spirit works in the sanctified, may be seen by comparing Eph. 3 : 20, with 1 Jno. 4 : 4.

All men are indeed depraved, but all are not equally Satanic. How many have natural kindness and generosity ! Will such ever become insolent and injurious to the pious and benevolent ? Never, unless their conscience be wrongly directed by so-called priests, bishops and rulers. Acts 26 : 9, etc. . But if so, even they may join in the wild insane cry, Away with these saints from the earth, for it is not fit that they should live. Acts 22 : 22.

Will persecution by word and deed cease before our Lord comes? See 2 Thes. 1 : 4,*7 ; Rev. 13 and 17 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 12.

8. *To de telos*, an adverbial phrase = But in conclusion, or lastly. K friendly-minded, or courteous, *philophrones* ; A B C S lowly-minded, *tapeinophrones* ; L vg Oec Thph have both.

9. A B C K S syr vg because (*hoti*) to this were ye called ; L Oec Thph prefix knowing. *Paying off* and *inherit* are metaphors. " I will pay you for that," savors of the bottomless pit.

10. *To see*, by a common metaphor, is to know by experience ; as " to see death : " when relating to good, it is = to enjoy.

11. *Turn away, seek and chase*, are beautiful metaphors, above explained.

12. *Eyes, ears and face* are, by elliptical metaphors, attributed to Jehovah. Sept. and Peter, *kurios*. Steiger says Jehovah the Father ; but it is in conformity with Petrine theology, to say that the name refers to Christ. 2 : 3, 4 with Ps. 34 : 8 ; 2 : 7, 8 with Isa. 8 : 13, 14 ; and 3 : 15 with Isa. 8 : 13.

13. A B C S syr vg zealots, *zelotai* ; (zealots of the good : gen. obj. = zealous for the good. Cf. Tit. 2 : 14). K L Oec as c. t. imitators.

In the 9th verse, *eis touto*, with *hina* following : the *hina* introducing a further explanation of the purpose. Cf. 4 : 6 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 8.

Peter does not cite the last clause of Ps. 34 : 16, because that is expressive of a purpose not yet accomplished, and also because the Apostle's design is to show how God's reviled people may and do inherit a blessing, now and here, and as above explained.

¹⁴ But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye* : and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled ; ¹⁵ but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts : and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear : ¹⁶ having a good conscience ; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. ¹⁷ For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing.

Their duties and encouragements as persecuted disciples exposed to martyrdom : which is continued (with but slight breaks or interruptions, and these all bearing on the main topic,) to the end of the fourth chapter.

1. The blessedness of true martyrs emphatically affirmed, 14.

2. Directions and admonitions as to the right method of acting in the circumstances that generally precede martyrdom, 14-16.

3. Why Christian martyrs are blessed : the first reason, 17.

But even if ye should suffer on account of righteousness, blessed : or, *But if even* = although. But if even ye should suffer, as I think quite likely : *if* with the optative denoting

subjective possibility. *Suffer* = die painfully ; as in vs. 17, 18 ; 4 : 1, 15, 19. Ye are, or ye shall be, *blessed*. Mat. 5 : 10-12.

True martyrs suffer *on account of righteousness*, especially as manifested in the forms of benevolence and beneficence, vs. 9-13 ; not on account of sin, whether gross, brutal and generally condemned, 4 : 15, or shown by pride and bigotry. 1 Cór. 13 : 3. True martyrs are armed with the mind of Christ, 4 : 1, not with the harness of Satan. 1 Tim. 3 : 6. And it is self-evident that they who are like Christ must be blessed.

But before the Apostle states the reasons of their blessedness, he guides them to the right way of preparing for martyrdom : *Yet fear not their fear—i.e., the object of their fear, or what they dread, nor be troubled, but hallow the Christ as Lord in your hearts.* (See notes below.) Treat Him with the most heartfelt reverence and confidence as Jehovah the Messiah, and with all other affections that are due to His person and office. So banish the fear of man, and be not troubled or agitated with gloomy forebodings through the instinctive dread of dying. Isa. 8 : 12, 13.

In the reign of Pekah, King of Israel, those who were not in favor of the alliance with Rezin, King of Syria, were suspected of conspiracy : men they feared and trusted in, not Jehovah of Hosts. And persecutors, says Peter in substance, fear to be suspected by their superiors of conspiracy against the existing government, and dread death as the punishment of it ; but do ye hallow the Christ as Lord in your hearts : thus again, in the most natural and impressive manner, identifying Christ with Jehovah of Hosts. 2 : 3, 4, 7, 8 ; cf. Mat. 10 : 28, etc.

The second prerequisite : *Ready always for a defence* (answer to an accusation, especially to those in authority ; as in Acts 22 : 1 ; 25 : 16 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 16) *to every one that asketh you an account* (statement with proofs) *concerning the hope in you*, 1 : 3-5, and ver. 13, *but with meekness and fear*. With

meekness, as opposed to indignation and revenge ; with a mild calm, and forgiving spirit. With fear, or respect to inquirers after truth, and this proceeding from reverence to the Lord Christ.

The precept, be ready always for a defence, implies knowledge, love and boldness : Since you know that your hope of eternal glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ is built on solid foundations, and you love the Redeemer, shrink not from making a proper defence of the hope that is living and moving in your souls.

The third prerequisite : With the defence just spoken of, habitually maintain a good conscience, one testifying to your good walk in Christ, in order that they who falsely accuse you as criminals may be put to shame. Cf. 2 : 12. *Having, holding or retaining, a good conscience*, cf. Heb. 13 : 18, *in order that, wherein* (in the matter in which) *they speak against you as evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good walk in Christ.*

A good conscience is an upright or approving conscience ; mens sibi conscia recti, the consciousness which the mind has of purity of motive in any act, or course of action. The opposite is *an evil conscience*, one accusing and condemning, Heb. 10 : 22, testifying to impurity of motive, or lawless living. Peace attends the one ; remorse the other. Rom. 2 : 15. An unrenewed man may have in some things a good conscience, or an inward approbation of what he is doing, as Saul of Tarsus, Acts 23 : 1 ; but such an approving conscience is not rightly taught, but misdirected by traditional theology. But Peter is here addressing the renewed, and speaks of a conscience combined with faith, and enlightened by the Word and Spirit of God : cf. ver. 21 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 5, 19, a consciousness of having steadily endeavored to overcome evil with good, vs. 9-14. And there cannot be such a good conscience without *a good walk in Christ*, or a constant progress in holiness, produced in consequence of our spiritual union with Christ. See notes on 2 : 4, 5, and cf. Jno. 15 : 4, 5 ; Rom. 8 : 9, 10 ; Gal. 2 : 20.

These are the three prerequisites for martyrdom, the right way of preparing the soul to suffer as a Christian ; and no better directions can be given or thought of : and whence had a fisherman of Galilee such wisdom, if not from the Spirit of Christ and of God ?

The first reason assigned for the blessedness of Christian martyrs : *For it is better*, etc. To suffer, or die, for well-doing, is the same as to suffer for righteousness' sake, ver. 14. If ye should so suffer, blessed ; *for it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing*. Better, for God is the best judge of the time and manner of His people's death ; and if He has determined that you should leave the world as Christian martyrs, it will be for your eternal advantage. To die for well-doing is better than to die for evil-doing, like the wicked in general or criminals in particular, 4 : 15, 16 ; since you have a hope of obtaining an incomparable patrimony when Christ appears, but they are driven away in their wickedness, and have no hope in their death. 1 : 3, etc. ; Prov. 14 : 32.

They who hallow Christ as Jehovah in their hearts, are true believers ; and if they be put to death on that account, and for acting as He did when on earth, they are unquestionably genuine Christian martyrs.

Cruel mockings are sometimes as hard to endure as burning at the stake. In either case, practical attention to the precepts before us is indispensably necessary.

The defence required of Christians generally is not a learned and elaborate one, but a plain unvarnished statement of their hope as Christians : what it is, on what it is based, how it originated and is upheld, and what effects it produces ; and this with meekness and reverence.

Such a defence is to be made at any time to every one who is willing to listen to proof, or whose curiosity is excited, and who desires a rational account of that which appears strange to him ; and especially to every one in authority who may inquire about a Christian's hope before he sentences him to death : and to this Peter particularly alludes.

But we are not bound to give an account of our hope to scorers wise in their own conceit and on the look-out for sophistical triumphs, not truth ; for this would be casting pearls before swine, and giving that which is holy to dogs. Mat. 7 : 6 ; cf. Prov. 14 : 6, 7.

As admirable specimens of Christian defences, we may refer the reader to Stephen before the Sanhedrim, Paul before Agrippa, and Luther at the Diet of Worms.

14. *Yet fear not*, etc. This is very appropriately cited, since in Isa. 8 : 11-13, Jehovah, through the prophet, directly addresses the pious.

15. K L Oec Thph have the Lord God, as c. t., but A B C S syr cop sah vg Clement Fulgentius, and Bede *kurion ton Christon* = The Christ as Lord—*i.e.*, Jehovah. Isa. 8 : 13 ; cf. Lk. 2 : 11, Gr. A K L have *2d de*, but B C S vg cop ready always : K L with meekness and fear, A B C S prefix but, *alla*. *Pros apologian*, etc. That the defence required relates especially to one before magistrates is evident, (1.) from the general use of the word, as in the passages above referred to. (2.) From the fact that Christians were not falsely accused as evil-doers, political offenders, or criminals, so as to gain the ear of the Roman rulers, before the reign of Nero. (3.) It is certain that they did not suffer under that false accusation until Nero began the persecution. Cf. 4 : 15, 16.

17. A B C K L S Oec Thph *theloi* : *Ei theloi* (subjective possibility is denoted, as in ver. 14) *to thelema tou Theou*, lit. = *If the will of God should will it*, as I judge likely : If the will of God be so. The optative intimates that the Apostle had received no express revelation as to the extent of the persecution, but, from facts occurring at Rome, 4 : 12, he judged it probable that the disciples in the five provinces would not escape the fury of the persecutors.

¹⁸ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit : ¹⁹ by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison ; ²⁰ which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

In vs. 18-22, Peter speaks of the suffering and resurrection of Christ ; of His preaching to the Antediluvians, with its results ; of baptism as saving ; of the ascension of our

Lord into heaven, and His session at the right hand of God : and all in order to encourage them to die as martyrs, as is evident from 4 : 1, 19, and 3 : 14, 17.

As to the paragraph before us, or with respect to the preaching spoken of, we may say of it and 4 : 6, what Peter declares of Paul's Epistles : " In which are some things hard to be understood," etc. 2 Ep. 3 : 16. And that because of the prejudices or preconceived opinions of men, which surely but insidiously lead to the dangerous business of wresting God's most holy and truthful Word. Herein the utmost vigilance and honesty are necessary, in order to honor God, and to promote our own and others' salvation.

The second reason assigned for the blessedness of martyrs ; or the second motive to encourage them to die for the sake of righteousness, or for well-doing, if such should be the purpose of God in their case : *Because even Christ suffered once for all concerning sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us near to God.* If ye should suffer on account of righteousness, or for well-doing, ye will be blest ; because ye will be conformed to Christ (Phil. 3 : 10 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 13), who died for well-doing in the strictest sense, when He suffered as our legal substitute and surety. Cf. 2 : 21-24.

This motive from the love of the Redeemer, all-constraining and delightful to renewed souls, is enhanced (1.) from the Dignity of the Sufferer : *even Christ* (2 : 21), the God-man, or as the Apostle describes Him in ver. 15, *Jehovah the Christ*. Cf. vs. 2 : 3, 4, 7, 8, with 1 : 20. (2.) From the perfect sufficiency of His satisfaction : intimated by *once for all*. Cf. Heb. 10 : 1-10. (3.) By designating the nature of His suffering or death (Lk. 24 : 26 ; Acts 1 : 3), and those for whom He suffered. *Concerning sins*, relates to the object ; that about or for which He suffered, 2 : 24. *The righteous for the unrighteous* ; in their stead and for their benefit. It was a legally personal exchange, the substitution of the Sinless One in the room of the sinful. His death, then, was vicarious, and for the unrighteous. Cf. Rom. 5 : 6-8. (4.) From one great design of His death : *that He might*

bring us near to God, as the pacified Lawgiver and Judge, as reconciled to us in consequence of the suffering of Christ ; permitting us with confidence to speak to God as our Father and Friend. Bringing us near to God, is a substitution for effecting peace or reconciliation in relation to God ; and hence a holy boldness in all acts of worship, and a hope of eternal glory. Cf. Rom. 5 : 1, 2 ; Acts 10 : 36.

Put to death indeed as to His flesh, but made alive by His Spirit. In our judgment, this is a description of the resurrection of the Saviour. *Put to death indeed* ; which all admit refers to a violent death ; as in Mk. 13 : 12 ; 14 : 55 ; Rom. 8 : 36 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 9. *As to the flesh, or in the flesh—i.e., so far as concerns, or in, His human nature.* (*Flesh*, by synecdoche ; a part for the whole.) When a human being is put to death, there is a violent separation of the soul from the body ; the latter only becoming lifeless. *But made alive*, the opposite of put to death, which can only mean raised from the dead, made alive by the reunion of soul and body ; as in 1 Cor. 15 : 22 ; Jno. 5 : 21 ; Rom. 4 : 17 ; 8 : 11. Not kept alive, or made more lively, which is not the meaning of the verb in the New Testament ; we refer to the other passages where it is found. Jno. 6 : 63 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 36, 45 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 6 ; Gal. 3 : 21 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 13. But how was “the Lord Christ” made alive? *By His Spirit*, or divine nature ; by His power as Jehovah. (Other interpretations are noticed below.) In Jno. 2 : 19, 10 : 17, 18, Christ’s resurrection is attributed to the power of His Godhead. And so in 2 Cor. 13 : 4, if “power of God” be the genitive of the adjunct : “He was crucified from weakness, but He liveth from divine power”—i.e., His crucifixion was owing to the weak or mortal nature He assumed at His incarnation ; but His present life in His glorified human nature is because of His divine power. (See Hodge in loc.)

In which spirit also having gone He preached (or, *He also went and preached*) *to the spirits in prison, disobedient formerly, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of*

Noah, while the ark was preparing, entering into which few, that is, eight souls were saved through water.

As to the meaning of this greatly controverted context, we agree with eminent theologians of the Reformed Church in supposing that Peter first speaks of Christ as the God-man, ver. 18, and next of Him as the Eternal Word or Angel-Jehovah, and of His acts as such to Noah and the Antediluvians. (Such rapid transitions from the one nature to the other of one and the same unique person, and of corresponding works, are not unusual in Scripture—*e.g.*, Heb. 1 : 1-3 ; Phil. 2 : 5-11 ; Isa. 9 : 6, 7.) See Beza in loc. We understand the Apostle thus : Made alive, or raised from the dead, by His spiritual or divine nature ; in which spiritual or divine nature, as the Eternal Word (*logos asarkos*) or Angel-Jehovah, He went or visibly manifested Himself to Noah and through him as His prophet or legate, preached to the spirits in Tartarus ; imprisoned or punished there as disembodied, because they were disobedient formerly, or refused when in the body to believe and obey the revelation made known to them, when the long-suffering of God held out the full time of the reprieve granted them, Gen. 6 : 3, in Noah's days, during the building of the ark.

In which *He also went* or visibly manifested Himself to Noah, either in vision or by temporarily appearing in a human form. Cf. Num. 12 : 6 ; Isa. 6, with Jno. 12 : 40, 41 ; Gen. 18 ; Josh. 5 : 13, etc. ; Ex. 3. *And preached*, caused the Gospel to be proclaimed to the Antediluvians by Noah His legate and prophet. What one does by His legate He does by Himself. Mat. 14 : 3, 10. "Herod had laid hold of John, and bound him, and put him in prison"—*i.e.*, he caused it to be done, or did it by appointed agents. Paul says that Christ, after His crucifixion, *came and preached* peace to both Gentiles and Jews ; Eph. 2 : 16, 17—*i.e.*, in and by the apostles, His ambassadors, He appeared and announced the Gospel of peace to both. Mat. 28 : 20. And in like manner He preached by Noah. In order to see the point of this explanation, we must carefully attend to

Jno. 1 : 18. "God no one hath seen at any time ; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." The Father, then, has never been seen, nor has He ever directly made revelations to men ; but the theophanies (appearances of Jehovah) and revelations recorded in the Old Testament belong to the Son, or Eternal Word, who is of the same nature with the Father, perfectly acquainted with all His counsels, the representative and revealer of God. Accordingly, it follows that the revelation which Noah received and preached was from the Son, who went or manifested Himself to Noah in His spiritual or divine nature. Gen. 6. Noah was an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith, and by building the ark practically and pointedly condemned the men then living for their unbelief and rebellion, Heb. 11 : 7. He was also a preacher of righteousness to an ungodly world, 2 Pet. 2 : 5 ; and hence he must have preached the Angel-Jehovah as the one who was to become the Seed of the woman, the future Saviour of men, and explained the meaning of sacrifices in relation to Him ; emphatically insisting on their duty to believe and obey the revelation which he had received from Him, the Sent-Jehovah. Thus the Gospel was preached to them when living on earth.

To the spirits in prison, to those now in prison : spirits in prison at the time the Apostle wrote, which is clear from what follows : *disobedient formerly*, refusing to believe and obey when in the body, in the time of Noah. Besides, it is a causal participle, as in 2 : 8 = *because they were formerly disobedient*. They are imprisoned spirits, because of their former disobedience. *In prison*, is the right translation ; not merely in safe-keeping, or in a watch-tower, as some suppose, but in a place of punishment, a place of confinement for the disobedient ; as in Rev 20 : 7, a place in which they are punished by confinement, and kept for future judgment. The phrase, therefore, is = in Tartarus. Cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 5, with vs. 3, 4, 9. Or, it is = in Hades, considered as the place of torment to disembodied spirits. Lk. 16 : 23, 28 ;

cf. Jude, vs. 6, 13. Not in or on the earth, considered as a great cell or dungeon prepared for their bodily destruction, as others suppose ; for Peter speaks of spirits in prison, of the punishment of disembodied men, not of the embodied.

Besides, he speaks of those spirits *who when on earth had their day of grace for one hundred and twenty years before the flood came, and destroyed their bodies : when the long-suffering of God waited*, etc. These spirits are in prison, because they were then unbelieving and rebellious. So widespread was the ruin, that only eight souls, by entering into the ark, were brought safely through the water, in which the rest of mankind perished. Whether we translate, *were brought safely through the water*, or, *were saved by water*, the sense is : while the water to those outside of the ark was the means of death, to those within it was the means of preservation or deliverance. *The long-suffering of God waited* : it is a personification. Cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 9, 15.

The interpretation now stated and briefly illustrated may be confirmed by the following considerations :

1. The word *flesh*, when applied to Christ, generally means His human nature, and it always has this signification when in the same passage it is contrasted with His Spirit, or divine nature—*e.g.*, Rom. 1 : 3, 4. “Born of the seed of David as to the flesh, declared to be the Son of God as to the spirit of holiness”—*i.e.*, a descendant of David as to His human nature, the Son of God as to His holy divine nature.

The same thing appears from passages parallel in thought : “Whose are the fathers, and of whom the Christ as to the flesh,” or with respect to His human nature, “who,” in His divine nature, “is God over all, blessed forever,” the Supreme God, worthy of eternal adoration and praise. Rom. 9 : 6. “The Word became flesh,” Jno. 1 : 14, He who existed from eternity with God and as God assumed human nature.

Some passages will be meaningless and absurd, unless this explanation of *flesh* be adopted : “In the body of his flesh,”

surely does not mean the body of His body. Col. 1 : 22. "God having sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh," means in the likeness of sinful men, or with a weak mortal human nature, not with a human body alone. And when "God condemned sin in his flesh," it can only mean in Christ's human nature. Rom. 8 : 3 ; cf. Heb. 5 : 7.

Peter himself so uses it here ; which is evident from 4 : 1, "*Christ, then, having suffered for us as to his flesh,*" where the *then* is resumptive, pointing back to 3 : 18. Now, His divine nature cannot suffer or die ; hence *put to death as to the flesh*, means that a violent separation of His soul and body, the essential constituents of human nature, took place.

2. As to the term *spirit* : It is a word suitable to express Christ's divine nature, for "God is a spirit." Jno. 4 : 24. The word is so used in parallel passages ; as in Rom. 1 : 3, 4 ; Heb. 9 : 14 ; and Mk. 2 : 8. "Jesus immediately knew by his spirit," etc. He instantly knew the thoughts or mental reasoning of these men by His Spirit. But His human soul has not this attribute, neither is it a perfection belonging to any created intellect. None can see directly what passes through the mind of another but the Omniscient. 1 Ki. 8 : 39 ; Ps. 139 : 2. But this Jesus did by His Spirit, or divine nature. Cf. Rev. 2 : 23. *Made alive by His Spirit*, does not refer to Christ's human soul ; for it cannot be proved that the power of restoring life to a dead body and reuniting it to the soul, is inherent in Christ's human spirit. To raise the dead is the effect of omnipotence ; but that is not an attribute belonging to our Lord's human soul.

3. Our interpretation is not only sanctioned by usage, and consistent with the practical aim of the Apostle, but also in perfect keeping with the Scriptural doctrine concerning the Angel-Jehovah, or the Eternal Word, and of His acts previous to His incarnation. (See Principal Hill's Lectures in Divinity, and Hodge's Systematic Theology.)

This interpretation is encumbered with less difficulties than any other yet proposed, as we shall attempt to show in the notes below.

The 19th and 20th verses, then, contain the third motive to encourage them to die for the sake of righteousness, or well-doing : If ye, however few there may be when compared with the multitudes around you, believe the revelation made known by the incarnate Christ through us apostles, and die on account of your obedience to Him, blessed will ye be in heaven, Mat. 5 : 12 ; but if ye, through fear of men, ver. 14, refuse to believe and obey Him, ye will at death be spirits in prison, like the Antediluvians, who obstinately rejected the revelation made by Christ before His incarnation, and published to them by Noah, His legate and prophet.

18. As to the text, A B C K L S Did have *pneumati*, without the article, which is unquestionably genuine ; Oec. with the article.

20. A B C K L S *apexede cheto : hapax* (E. V. once) originated from a conjecture and interpolation of Erasmus (2d ed.), as Tischendorf and others suppose. In all other respects the c. t. in vs. 18-20 is well supported, and not disputed. In the exposition above given, we understand by the spirits in prison the spirits of adults, not of infants or children that had not arrived to the age of discretion, for the Apostle characterizes them as *disobedient* formerly, cf. 2 : 8, 3 : 1, as unwilling to believe and obey, as obstinate rebels ; but this cannot be said of those who die before they have any knowledge of God and Christ, or of law and duty.

I. Other interpretations of this context : Witsius (Oec. 4 : 2) and others explain *Spirit* of the Holy Spirit. It is indeed true that the Holy Spirit was in the prophets, 1 : 11, and that they were the interpreters or spokesmen of Christ ; but this leaves *went* unexplained. Christ went as Jehovah, ver. 15, and by His Spirit in His legate preached. Gen. 6.

The opinion that Peter alludes to Christ's preaching by His apostles, after His resurrection, may be mentioned, but need not be refuted : cf. ver. 20.

II. Many hold that Christ in His human spirit, in the interval between His death and resurrection, preached to disembodied spirits in the world of spirits. But the opinions and conjectures of those who agree in this general position are various and conflicting. *Where* in the spirit-world did He go ? *To whom* did He preach, and *what* ? And what was the *design* and *result* of such preaching ? To these questions contradictory answers are given.

1. Papists hold that He went in His human soul to *limbus patrum*, somewhere near the place of torment, in which limbus they maintain that the spirits of the O. T. saints were detained ; were in *confinement* or *safe-keeping* : and that He took them thence to paradise or heaven. But

that limbus exists only in their imagination ; and nothing is said in the text of any transfer of the spirits ; and the preaching spoken of was not to saints, but to the disobedient. (As to purgatory, see below.)

2. What has now been said also refutes the opinion of Horsey, that Christ in His human soul went to the paradise of the saints (a sort of porch in front of heaven, as he takes it), and announced to them that His sacrifice on the cross had been accomplished. But saints are not rebels, and Christ preached only to the disobedient. To suppose that some repented before the flood came or at that time, is perfectly gratuitous. *Additions to a divine revelation, are not explanations of it.* Fairbairn's explanation, in his Hermeneutical Manual, if we understand it, is simply a modification of Horsey's view : Christ's entrance into paradise was a preaching, not by words, but by deed. His going there was a practical discourse. But it is not easy to see how our Lord's presence in His human spirit in heaven, was a preaching by deed to the disobedient in the place of torment.

3. Others maintain that Christ in His human soul went to the place of the lost, preached the Gospel to them, and that they who believed were delivered, or taken by Him from the place of torment ; and that this supposed preaching to spirits in prison is a specimen of what generally takes place. But here are assumptions that need the most convincing proof before they can be received : as, (1.) that Christ has a church in hell, or the place of the damned. (2.) That He Himself often goes there in His naked human spirit to preach to the condemned, who are members of it. (3.) That they who refuse to believe and obey the Gospel here will have an opportunity to accept or reject it there. (4.) That there is a way of escape, or a road from the bottomless pit into heaven—not a great gulf fixed between the two. Lk. 16 : 26. That preaching means deliverance from the prison spoken of.

4. Others restrict it thus : That for those who never heard the Gospel, a day of grace begins in Hades. But this presupposes that it would be unjust in God to punish or consign to a hopeless state those who had no opportunity to read or hear the Gospel ; which is a baseless assumption : For men will be judged by the law or rule they had ; the unevangelized by the unwritten revelation God made to them in external nature, and in reason and conscience. Rom. 1 and 2. Now, there is no partiality or injustice with God, since men will be tried by the light they have, or which is within their reach, not by that which they have not. Besides, on earth men sow, in the spirit-world they reap ; and the reaping is according to the deeds done in the body. Gal. 6. This is the uniform doctrine of Scripture. And no misunderstood and perverted text can alter it. As to the evangelized who reject or pervert the Gospel, compare 2 Pet. 2 : 1-10. Moreover, even if the Gospel should be proclaimed to

rebellious human spirits in the prison where they are confined, what would it profit them, if they retained their depraved rebellious disposition? "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death." Prov. 14 : 32. Retaining their sinful disposition, the state of the wicked when driven from earth or in the spirit-world is hopeless. And how can any be renewed by the preaching of the Gospel except by the agency of the Spirit of God? But where is there a promise that God will give the Spirit to renew and sanctify the incorrigible in the place of torment?

5. Pearson, in his able work on the Creed, if we rightly understand him, says that Christ, in His human spirit went to the place of lost souls, to discharge His duty as our legal substitute in the expiation of our sins. To which it is sufficient to reply that Peter is not, in vs. 19, 20, speaking of Christ as our Priest, but as the Great Prophet, the Angel-Jehovah, the Revealer of God and of His counsels. To go and preach is one thing; to go and suffer, or be in the place of torment, is another and a very different thing. Not a syllable does the Apostle lisp of the latter.

6. Steiger and Mombert, who have done good service in refuting many exegetical vagaries, maintain that Christ in His human spirit, between His death and resurrection, preached to the spirits of the Antediluvians, and to them alone; and that nothing is said or revealed here concerning the effects of that preaching, whether beneficial or otherwise, to many, few or any. They further contend that no other interpretation is tenable. And if it could be demonstrated that Christ preached as they affirm, then, in our judgment, their interpretation must be received as alone accurate and honest.

But that Christ preached as they affirm, is not certain. (1.) If *flesh* and *spirit* here mean Christ's body and disembodied soul, as they contend, then it follows that His spirit, between His death and resurrection was dead or lifeless; for *made alive* cannot be metaphorically understood, it being the opposite of *put to death*, which all take in its literal signification. Now, who can prove that a lifeless spirit, or a temporary nonentity, could either go or preach? (2.) 2 Pet. 2 : 5, when examined in the light of the context, vs. 1-10, shows that Peter himself considered the state of the Antediluvians in prison, or in Tartarus, as hopeless; as spirits now punished, and reserved for future judgment. But who can believe that Christ, in His human spirit, would go and preach the Gospel to those spirits who, when on earth, had rejected it for one hundred and twenty years, and whose destiny is irrevocably fixed? (3.) Their explanation contradicts what is elsewhere revealed about Christ's human spirit, between His death and resurrection. That Spirit, at that time, was not among spirits in prison, not with the disobedient of Noah's age, or of any other; but in the hands of His Father, safe in His protec-

tion and at rest, not going and preaching to any ; safe and at rest in Paradise, the residence of departed saints, the Eden of the disembodied blest. Lk. 23 : 43, 46. (4.) According to their exegesis, facts or acts concerning Christ's human spirit, in themselves most wonderful and not clearly or at all stated elsewhere in the whole Scripture, are here mentioned ; while of the effects of such acts nothing is declared—*i.e.*, whether few, many, or any were benefited by the preaching. But who can believe that Peter would describe Christ as exercising His prophetic office even in the prison of the disobedient, and yet give not any hint of its design and results ?

7. Others have ventured to affirm that the preaching was to both the pious and wicked in the world of spirits ; but this is to contradict, not explain, the Apostle, who speaks only of those who were disobedient, and that in Noah's days, during the building of the ark, when Jehovah said to Noah : " Thee only have I seen righteous before me in this generation."

Calvin says that the O. T. saints in paradise were like persons in a watch-tower, anxiously expecting the promised salvation, and that Christ as Jehovah came by the manifestation of His grace, or the vital efficacy of the Spirit, to their spirits ; or that the anxiety of their expectation and longing (after Christ's death), was like a prison to them : all which (contrary to Calvin's usual manner) is decidedly obscure, and by no means convincing, since preaching to the disobedient is not the expectation of saints. A like obscurity and untenableness appear in Luther's very different explanation in his lectures on the Epistles of Peter, where he says *flesh* means a weak and mortal body, and spirit a glorified or spiritual body.

The opinion of those who explain this context of preaching to the dead in sins, is forced and violent, and needs no refutation, since it is now generally abandoned as untenable.

Many have been bewildered as to this context by assuming that *sarki* and *pneumati* are datives of the same kind. We hold that *sarki* is a dative of reference = *as to His flesh*, but that *pneumati* is a causal dative = *by His Spirit* : and what is there to prevent the use of different datives in contrasted clauses, when the nature of the subject requires it ? For example, 1 Pet. 2 : 24, " That we being at a distance with respect to the sins" (dative of reference). " might live in (or, according to) righteousness" : (dative of manner).

From " in which he went " down to the end of the 21st verse, there is a specimen of that sort of digression which Paley calls " going off at a word" : so that the 22d verse is historically connected with the 18th verse. But the digression is well adapted to enforce the exhortation to martyrdom, as we have above shown.

Before the dogma concerning that imaginary place called *Purgatory* can stand, it must be proved from right reason and Scripture, (1.) That the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, does not cleanse a believer from all sin. (2.) That any sufferings of the imperfectly sanctified can help in any way to cancel their guilt. (3.) That any true saints, when out of the body, have still the seeds of sin within them. (4.) That the sufferings of such imperfect spirits naturally tend to promote their sanctification. (5.) Or, if not so, that the influences of the Holy Spirit are given to those who are excluded from paradise. (6.) That their sufferings are disciplinary, and not penal. (7.) That their sufferings will terminate ; and if so, when and on what grounds. (8.) That they, redeemed and purified in part at least by their own sufferings, shall at last be received into heaven. It is to be feared that intelligent men who are zealots for this dogma, unless they repent, " may go farther, and fare worse."

For a brief but lucid summary of the history of opinions on this context, we refer to Steiger.

From this brief review of the leading opinions, it appears that the interpretation which we have before stated and illustrated, is encumbered with less difficulties than any other yet proposed.

" The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ : " who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God ; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

The general likeness subsisting between the former deliverance of Noah and his family, and the present salvation of adult believers : Entering into which a few—that is, eight souls were saved through water : *which baptism, a corresponding thing, now saveth us also*, etc. ; or, *which (water) in like manner is now saving us also*, I mean *baptism*, etc. Entering into the ark by faith was the means of temporal salvation to Noah and his family, so saved by water : entering into the church, baptism, is now the means of eternal salvation to believers. Thus they correspond, or are alike. (See Calvin in loc.)

Others hold that the salvation in the ark was a type of the salvation by Christian baptism, and render thus : *which in an antitype is now saving us also*. The word *antitype* is the Greek *antitupon* Anglicized, which primarily means formed

after a type or model ; hence likeness, copies corresponding to the originals, as in Heb. 9 : 24 ; cf. ver. 23. It is not absolutely certain that Peter uses *antitupon* as in Heb. 9 : 24 ; and hence the former interpretation is preferable. But either way the sense is substantially the same. (God indeed instituted types, and, from the Epistle to the Hebrews, it seems that they are restricted to the tabernacle, priests and sacrifices, and whatever pertains to the ceremonial law. If there be any others, that must be proved by explicit and unmistakable passages of Holy Scripture.)

Noah and his family were saved not simply by water, but by that after they had entered into the ark ; and a similar thing must be said of Christian baptism : *not the putting away of the filth of the flesh*, etc., not a mere bodily cleansing, as in the use of the external ordinance, but a cleansing of the soul, evinced by the stipulation toward God of a good conscience.

The nature of Christian baptism, subjectively considered ; or, in its relation to the salvation of the baptized. *Flesh* must always be explained in conformity with the subject spoken of ; here it is the same as body, and in the original it stands before *putting away* ; which may be expressed thus in our idiom : *Not the bodily putting away of filth*, not mere corporeal cleansing, but a cleansing of the soul. This is the general truth underlying the particular expressions. *But the answer of a good conscience toward God* : lit., *the thing asked*, interrogation or question, which our translators take by metonymy for the necessarily implied answer ; supposing an allusion to the question or questions put to those about to be baptized. Hence Fausset, thus : A good conscience's interrogation (the satisfactory answer being included) *toward God*. Beza and Lillie : *A stipulation toward God of a good conscience*. Bretschneider : *The inquiry (seeking) of a good conscience after God*. Steiger takes "of a good conscience" as the genitive of the object : the inquiry for a good conscience with respect to God, or the desire to gain and retain such a conscience ; an upright seek-

ing or worshipping of God. A. B. Union : *the requirement of a good conscience toward God.*

It is not easy to give the meaning of *eperotema* by one English word ; but we understand the clause thus : The thing asked or desired, proceeding from an upright or approving conscience (3 : 16) in its relation to God ; or a holy desire to please God in the matter, which includes a promise of obedience. (*Eperotema*, here only in N. T., but the cognate verb often occurs. Cf. Rom. 10 : 20. A question is indicative of a desire to increase in knowledge, in its aim corresponding to the disposition of him who proposes it.) Baptism, then, saves us, is the instrumental cause of our salvation, is salvation begun : not the mere observance of the external ceremony, or the purification of the body by water, but the cleansing of the soul by the Holy Spirit, evinced by the baptized in a desire to please and obey God, and the promise to do so, arising from the depths of a pure conscience : in this sense, *A stipulation toward God of a good conscience.* This, moreover, is the thing asked or required by God ; but Peter refers not to what God demands, but what a good conscience asks for in its relation to God ; how one must enter into the Christian Church in order to be saved. Cf. Eph. 5 : 26 ; Tit. 3 : 5.

A good conscience, as Lillie happily expresses it, "is a *blood-sprinkled* conscience," delivered from the dread of condemnation, since it is connected with faith in the risen Redeemer, who bore our sins ; "it is also a *sanctified* conscience, 'purged from dead works to serve the living God.' " Heb. 10 : 2, 22 ; 9 : 14.

How, or on what grounds, this baptism saves believers : *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ* ; by His power as the risen Saviour, Messiah the priest, in consequence of whose intercession the Spirit is given to men, cf. 1 : 3 ; for so we are saved by His life. Rom. 5 : 10 ; 8 : 34. *Who, having gone into heaven, is at the right hand of God*, associated with God, or His Co-regent, in the government of the universe ; the head of all principalities, *angels and authorities and pow-*

ers being made subject unto Him : infinitely able, therefore, to reward His martyrs with " the unfading crown of glory," and to bestow on those outwardly and inwardly baptized " the grace of life."

The Ceremonial Law of the present dispensation is comprised in two positive ordinances, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which all the evangelized are under a moral obligation to observe as Christ enjoins, and because He so commands. " Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Baptism, objectively considered, is a positive ordinance instituted by Christ, by the observance of which men are required to consecrate themselves to the service of the One only living and true God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost ; Mat. 28, which is a public profession of Christianity, or an entering into the church of God.

Baptism, subjectively considered and as saving, is an observance of this positive ordinance with purity of motive, or with faith and a good conscience. And this profession of Christianity by a purified soul is for adults, of whom alone Peter is here speaking, ordinarily, an indispensable means of salvation, since it is a sign and an outward acknowledgment of the inward cleansing. Cf. Rom. 10 : 9, 10.

The validity of baptism does not depend on the quantity of water used in administering the ordinance, nor in the mode in which it is applied to the baptized ; but in the application of water to the body in obedience to the commandment of Christ ; whether that be by pouring, sprinkling, or dipping. So the validity of the Lord's Supper does not depend on the quantity of bread and wine used, nor whether they are partaken of standing, kneeling, or sitting ; but by doing it in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice for us, and because He so commands.

21. A B C K L S which ; a few cursives to which ; S has not the relative pronoun : A B S vg you ; C K L cop us. A. B. Union : *which in an antitype, immersion, now saves us also*, etc. But to translate *baptisma* by *immersion*, is absurd. (1.) For Peter's idea of baptism is

expressed by cleansing, putting away of filth, for which immersion is not necessary. (2.) The Apostle is not speaking of any particular external mode of cleansing, but especially of the purification of the soul, and of baptism as the sign of such purification, and to true believers inseparably connected with it. (3.) The immersion which destroyed the bodies of the Antediluvians, is very unlike that baptism which saves believers. (4.) If immersion now, or in this dispensation, and as Peter speaks of it, saves, and it alone ; then, all believers not immersed, even if cleansed by the Spirit and believing in Christ, must be lost, or be forever miserable.

CHAPTER IV.

Synopsis of contents :

Their duties and encouragements as persecuted disciples exposed to martyrdom, continued.

1. Arm yourselves with the mind of Christ, so that, while you live in the mortal body, you may live as holily as possible, 1-6.

2. Duties especially becoming them as a band or company of persecuted disciples, 7-11.

3. Do not be amazed at the severity of the persecution to which you as Christians are exposed, but rejoice, 12-19.

¹ Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind : for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin ; ² that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. ³ For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries : ⁴ wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you* : ⁵ who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. ⁶ For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

The duty enjoined, and the end to be had in view in performing it : *Christ, then* (the Apostle referring to 3 : 18), *having suffered for us as to His flesh—i.e.,* since He died for us in His human nature (a causal participle), *do ye also arm yourselves with the same mind*, the same disposition and resolution which Christ showed when suffering, or dying. Cf. 2 : 21-23. In Heb. 4 : 12, the same word is rendered

“*intents of the heart.*” (Not found elsewhere in N. T.) The metaphor happily expresses what is necessary for Christian martyrs in order to conquer their persecutors : equip yourselves with the very mind of Christ, the same meek, holy and forgiving spirit, the same inflexible determination to please God, the same perseverance in well-doing. If the will of God be so, 3 : 14, 17, die with this armor on. And this, *in order to live no longer the remaining time in the flesh according to the lusts of men, but according to the will of God* : to the end that so long as you live in the present mortal body, ye may live, not according to the desires of the ungodly as the rule of action, but according to the will of God as that rule. *Men*, as fallen and unrenewed, as in 4 : 6 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 3.

The motives : Gratitude should induce you to put on this armor ; since Christ died for you to bring you near to God. 3 : 18. The second motive is contained in the parenthetical clause : *because he that suffered in the flesh*, he who has endured a painful bodily death, armed with the mind of Christ, for of such a sufferer or martyr Peter is here speaking, *hath ceased from sin*, or *from sins*, as some copies read. Arm yourselves with the mind of Christ, for a truly Christian martyr at death ceases to sin, or is from that time sinless. Cf. 3 : 10 ; 2 Ep. 2 : 14. These passages show that sinning is intended. It cannot, therefore refer to Christ, who had no sin, either original or actual. He cannot cease from sin who never committed a sin. 2 : 22. And Peter is not speaking of sin imputed to Christ, but of sin or sins formerly committed by a believer, and of a ceasing to commit them any more : which the perfect tense intimates.

Neither does the Apostle in this clause treat of the mortification of sin and growth in holiness, for that is done in the words, “*in order to your living no longer,*” etc. And it is a very forced and arbitrary mode of explanation, to take *flesh* first as = our depraved disposition, and then as = our weak and mortal body. Besides, *he that suffered* is the aorist participle, describing the sufferer as dead, not as dying ; and

in the flesh designates the seat of the suffering, the weak mortal body : he who suffered in that. And *Peter* never uses *flesh* to denote the corrupt disposition, as Paul does. See note on 2 : 11. An appeal to Rom. 6 is not to the point ; for there Paul is speaking of the inseparable connection of justification and sanctification in consequence of a believer's union with Christ, not encouraging disciples to die for righteousness' sake, armed with Christ's mind. These things, carefully considered, show that Peter alludes to the death of a Christian martyr, and to his sinless life ever after.

The third motive : *For the past time of life is sufficient for us* (it is a penitential, not an ironical expression ; or that form of a hyperbole, often called meiosis, by which much more is intended than the phrase literally declares ;) *to have wrought out the will of the Gentiles*, to have done what they willed or desired, to have lived in conformity with the lusts of men, ver. 2, *when we walked* (having walked) *in lasciviousnesses, lusts, etc.*, habitually committed, or moved in these sins as in our native element. The Apostle alludes to various manifestations of uncleanness, drunkenness, and idolatry as specimens of what he means by working out the will of the Gentiles ; which sins were often committed as acts of devotion to their so-called gods. And the argument is well fitted to pierce the conscience : Arm yourselves with the mind of Christ, as aforesaid ; for we have walked too long already in shameful and abominable sins. (See Introduction to the Epistle.) This interpretation is clear and consistent throughout ; the Apostle admirably enforcing his exhortation by appealing to their gratitude to Christ, their longing for sinless purity, and their sorrow for past sins.

The fourth motive is presented under the form of a caution or warning : Let not the blasphemy of your former profligate companions hinder you from arming yourselves with the mind of Christ, for the purpose before stated ; since they will be without excuse at His tribunal. *Wherein they think it strange*, or, *at which they are astonished*—namely, *that ye run not with them* (lit. *your not running with them*—

i.e., because ye do not) *for the same outpouring of profligacy* ; that ye do not unite with them, eagerly and in crowds, for that purpose. *Outpouring*, by a metaphor, for the unrestrained indulgence of profligacy, or such sins as are mentioned in the preceding verse ; the figure being derived from the flow of a torrent. *Blaspheming* you—*i.e.*, reproaching you in the name of Christ, ver. 14, for abstinence from such nefarious deeds : calling you proud, menhaters, despisers of the gods, monotheistic fools, and, worst of all, insane worshippers of a man who was hung between two robbers near the gates of Jerusalem. *Who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the living and the dead* ; who must answer for these and other sins before the judgment-seat of Christ, He that is disposed and determined to punish the incorrigible, whether living or dead, at His appearing ; and who has been appointed by God as the Judge of all mankind. Acts 10 : 42. *To him that is ready*, or holds himself in readiness, is the same as prepared to discharge the duties of his office, at the proper time : the readiness meant relates to mental qualifications, especially to the disposition and will. Cf. Acts 21 : 13 ; 2 Cor. 12 : 14, Gr. And since “in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily,” His perfect competency is unquestionable : all the perfections of God and the virtues of man being in the God-man. Cf. Jno. 5 : 17-29. *To judge*, when applied to Christ at His second advent, means to act as king, or reign in righteousness, and punish with justice : here the latter is denoted, since Peter speaks of profligates or incorrigible sinners who must give an account of their doings to Him. See Lk. 19 : 22, with ver. 15 ; Acts 17 : 31, with Ps. 9 : 7, 8 ; Heb. ; 2 Tim. 4 : 1.

The fifth motive or argument enforcing the exhortation to arm as Christian martyrs is contained in the sixth verse, which is confessedly obscure, and from the earliest times made more so by conflicting interpretations, arising especially from preconceived non-Biblical opinions as to the state of the departed.

The perplexity of the English reader as to the meaning of the Apostle is owing in a considerable degree to the slavishly literal character of the translation. In our idiom, the words should be rendered thus : *For the Gospel was preached also to the dead for this purpose* (for the revelation of this purpose) *that they must indeed be judged after the manner of men as to the flesh, yet they should live after the manner of God as to the spirit.*

For is connected, grammatically, with the fifth verse ; and logically, with the precept in vs. 1, 2. *The Gospel was preached* : it is the 1 aor. indic. pas., and refers to past time, to past time indefinitely, time past when the Apostle wrote. The Gospel was not only preached to men now living on earth, but *also to the dead*, to men who no longer appear among us the living. *For this purpose* was it preached, or *to this end* : lit., *to this* as in 3 : 9, where, as here, the clause beginning with *that* (*hina*) is a further explanation of the purpose. In such constructions we often use *namely* : the Gospel was preached also to the dead for this purpose—namely, that, etc. Cf. Rom. 14 : 9 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 8. The Gospel was preached for a certain purpose—*i.e.*, to reveal or make known some purpose of God. Now, *what* was that purpose, and *to whom* was it revealed ? If these questions can be correctly answered, the whole difficulty in this text will disappear.

As to the purpose revealed : *What* was made known by the preaching of the Gospel ? *That they must indeed be judged* (or, *that although they must be judged*) *after the manner of men—i.e.*, be condemned, 1 Cor. 11 : 31, 32, or subjected to death like the unrenewed ; *men* = fallen or unrenewed men, as in 4 : 2 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 3 ; cf. Gen. 6 : 1, 2, with 5 : 2. The preposition *kata* (Eng. Vers., *according to*) is here used with the accusative to express the relation of similitude, or general likeness, and is = *after the manner of*, *as*, or *like* ; as in the following passages : “ I speak as a man,” like one unrenewed, or after his manner. (Rom. 3 : 5.) “ But we, brethren, like Isaac, are children of the promise.”

(Gal. 4 : 28.) "Not according to the covenant," etc., not like the covenant. (Heb. 8 : 9.) *As to the flesh*, so far as pertains to the body. *Yet they should live* (present tense, continue to live) *after the manner of God*, or, *like God, as to the spirit*, when absent from the body. If this exposition be accurate, as we think it is, then there can be no doubt as to the character of those *to whom* this purpose was revealed. They are not all the dead without exception and without distinction, but those to whom the Gospel was preached. Moreover, the dead intended are not simply those who once heard the Gospel, but those who believed and obeyed it ; for they only *live like God as to the spirit*, when it leaves the body, 4 : 17, 18. Hence the renewed, those who obeyed the Gospel of God are designated, in opposition to the disobedient, before mentioned. 3 : 19, 20. The sense then is : The Gospel was preached to the pious dead of this and preceding dispensations to disclose to them this purpose of God, that they must indeed fall under the sentence of the Lord as to the body, or return to dust, Gen. 3 : 19, like the unrenewed ; but that they should continue to live holily and blessedly like God as to the spirit, when absent from the body.

Some hold that the Gospel was preached to the dead when dead, or in the world of spirits ; but that is refuted in the notes on 3 : 19, 20. And if any persevere in sinning because of that delusion, they are hanging their souls over the mouth of hell on a spider's web—a mere human opinion ; for it cannot be proved to be a doctrine of divine revelation. The Apostle himself in this very text contradicts it ; for the words "that they must indeed be judged like men *as to the flesh*," clearly prove that he is speaking of a proclamation of the Gospel made to men while yet in the mortal body, and before they were judged or punished with death. They were among the living when the Gospel was preached to them, but dead when the Apostle wrote about it.

Others say that Peter means the morally dead. But "the

dead " here and in the fifth verse must be literally taken. And the Gospel is constantly preached to the morally dead, but here the Apostle speaks of it as something wholly past and gone.

Our interpretation of the sixth verse is thus confirmed :

1. It is consistent with usage, and at the same time natural and obvious, offering no violence to the language employed.

2. It is in perfect keeping with the main design of the Apostle in the preceding context, which is an exhortation to die, if necessary, as becomes Christian martyrs : Arm yourselves with the mind of Christ, in order that, while you live in the mortal body, you may please, not men, but God. (a) Gratitude to your Redeemer should animate you so to arm yourselves. (b) When one so armed endures a painful death in the body, he is made perfect in holiness. (c) We have walked too long already in shameful and abominable sins. (d) The revilings of your former profligate companions should not hinder you from arming yourselves with the mind of Christ, since they must give an account to Him that is ready to judge the living and the dead. (e) Arm yourselves as aforesaid, *for* one great design of the proclamation of the Gospel to the pious dead of this and preceding ages was to assure them that although they must be judged like the wicked as to the body, yet they should continue to live like God as to the spirit when absent from the body. Thus understood, the sixth verse contains an additional motive to enforce the duty enjoined ; the second motive relating to a martyr for the sake of Christ and righteousness, but this to the pious generally ; and hence it is well fitted to cheer any and every believer who strives to imitate Christ amidst cruel mockings, when the time of his exodus from the body has come.

3. It agrees well with what is stated in the fifth verse. Christ is *ready to judge the living and the dead* ; not only the wicked dead, but also the pious dead : *for* this readiness He has unmistakably shown by originally pronouncing

the sentence of the body's dissolution even on the children of God, and that when the protevangelium (the first gospel promise, or the first proclamation of the Gospel) fell from His lips. Gen. 3 : 15, 19.

4. It accounts for the death of believers. Why do they die, although Christ bore their sins in His body on the tree? It is in consequence of God's eternal, wise and holy purpose. It is evident that the Father determined from eternity that the bodies even of believers should undergo dissolution, in order to demonstrate to all intelligences His perfect abhorrence of sin ; and that the Son, with the same end in view, consented that they should see corruption until His second appearing to bruise Satan under His feet, and under the feet of the chosen. Gen. 3 : 15 ; Rom. 16 : 20 ; Heb. 2 : 14 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 23. And so concerning " the Spirit of glory," who sanctifies the chosen or prepares them for eternal glory. 4 : 14 ; 5 : 10. That *this* is the purpose of the One only living and true God, and a purpose revealed by the proclamation of the Gospel even from the earliest times, is taught in 1 Pet. 4 : 6. And what a demonstration of God's holiness it is ! From Adam to Moses, from Moses till the first advent of Christ (Enoch and Elijah alone excepted), from that advent until now, has the proof been accumulating ; the bodily dissolution invariably occurring, even in those who are chosen, redeemed and sanctified, 1 Pet. 4 : 6, therefore, relates to *the reserved rights of God* in the matter of our salvation, and of *His revealed purpose* concerning it.

5. It corresponds with what is written, Rom. 8 : 10, " If Christ is in you, the body indeed is dead on account of sin, but the Spirit is life on account of righteousness : " the bodies even of the sanctified are doomed to dissolution to show God's perfect hatred of sin, but the spirit at its departure from the body is destined to a sinless life because of Christ's righteousness.

The Lord Jesus Christ will judge the living and the dead, when He appears to set up His Kingdom. 2 Tim. 4 : 1 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 7, 13 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 11. He will, as Messiah the

King, execute judgment and justice in the earth ; or reign in righteousness and punish with justice. Jer. 23 : 5, 6 ; Jno. 5 : 17-29.

The judgment of the living at the revelation of Jesus Christ will embrace (1.) His avowed and implacable enemies : some, at the beginning of the millennium, Rev. 19 : 11-21 ; others, at its close, Rev. 20 : 8, 9. (2.) The evangelized population of the earth. Mat. 25 : 31-46. (3.) The members of the church then existing, Mat. 25 : 1-13 ; the rule of which judgment is stated, Mat. 25 : 14-30. Also, the teachers and rulers of the church. Mat. 24 : 45-51 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 1-4.

As to the dead : The resurrection of the holy dead, who are to reign with Christ during the period denoted by the thousand years (and afterwards forever and ever, Rev. 22 : 5), is described, Rev. 20 : 4-6 ; cf. 1 Cor. 6 : 2, 3 ; Mat. 19 : 28, 29, with Mk. 10 : 29, 30. Judgment, or kingly authority as co-regents of Christ, will then be given them. Dan. 7.

The resurrection and condemnation of all the unholy dead (till then spirits in prison), will not occur until the close of the millennium. Rev. 20 : 11-15, with ver. 5. The place of their punishment in their complete nature is symbolized, or pictured, by the lake of fire. It thus appears that the Day of Judgment, or the day in which Christ is to reign in righteousness and punish with justice, will embrace the whole period denoted by the thousand years. Between the morning and evening of the Great Day, the surviving nations adore and obey the Redeemer. Dan. 7 : 13, 14, 27 ; Rev. 21 : 23-27.

1. A B C L S *sarki* (2d), K and many others *en sarki* : B syr vg sins, S sin. 3. K L of life, A B C S syr cop vg omit : A B C S *boulema*, K L *thelema*. *Lasciviousnesses, lusts* ; the former relating to various wanton acts, the latter to the cherishing of unclean desires. Cf. 2 Ep. 2 : 18. *Excess of wine*, or drunkenness, lit. overflowings of wine, = vomitings proceeding from wine. *Revellings*, noisy outdoor drunkenness ; to the disgrace of that scurvy god, Bacchus. *Banquetings*, feasts

in which the same sin makes men more silly than brutes. *Abominable idolatries*: *athemitos*, unlawful, contrary to God's law, hence nefarious or abominable: used only by Peter. Cf. Acts 10:28. Drunkards are worshippers of Bacchus; the licentious, of Venus: which worship is abomination to the Lord.

4. *At which*, lit. *in which*, or, on which account, as in 1:6, the Apostle thus referring to the 3d verse, while he also further explains his meaning by what follows, "you not running with them," etc. *For* (with a view to) *the same outpouring of profligacy*: others take *outpouring* by metonymy (the act for the place) for slough, mire or sink: running together (like filthy torrents) into the same sink of profligacy. The Greek is *anachusis*, not *anachuma*.

6. Whether our interpretation of this difficult verse will commend itself to the reader's understanding or not, it is the result of long and careful study of the passage. Besides the considerations in its favor above suggested, it has another—namely, perspicuity: and a perspicuous exposition, if mistaken, can easily be refuted.

Flesh and *spirit* must always be explained according to the subject treated of: here men are spoken of, but in 3:18, the God-man. There is nothing in the verb rendered "the gospel was preached," nor is there any word or phrase in the text, by which the preaching is limited to any particular past time, as there is in 3:19, 20; which they overlook or disregard who imagine that the two passages are parallel. That has been too long assumed, but never clearly proved.

⁷ But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. ⁸ And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. ⁹ Use hospitality one to another without grudging. ¹⁰ As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Duties especially becoming them as a band of persecuted disciples: suitable, too, to be obeyed at all times. The Apostle begins with the great motive: *The end of all things has come nigh, or is near*. Cf. notes on Jas. 5:8, 9. Ye will soon see the concluding scene of the world as it now is, and has been ever since the Fall. Christ is ready to judge the

living and the dead, ver. 5. Satan, who now prowls about the flock, seeking whom he may devour, 5 : 8, 9, will be banished from the earth, his usurped realm, Rev. 20 : 1-3 ; and the incorrigibly wicked be driven from it, Ps. 37. Persecutions for righteousness' sake shall cease, 4 : 12, 13 ; Rev. 11 : 18 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 4-7. Ye shall be exempted from temptations, 2 Pet. 2 : 9 ; and on the renovated earth, not sinners, but the righteous shall dwell, 2 Ep. 3 : 13. Christ, personally present, " shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied ;" and your exultation be forever divested of sadness, 4 : 13, with 1 : 6, 7 ; 5 : 10. Compare what Peter says, Acts 3 : 19-21.

Peter introduces the nearness of the great consummation as the chief motive to enforce the exhortations contained in this paragraph : The end of all things is nigh ; *be ye therefore of a sound mind and sober unto prayers*. Cultivate mental sanity and sobriety, in order to honor God in private and public worship. *Be of a sound mind*, the opposite of to be beside one's self or insane. Mk. 5 : 15 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 13. Think, speak and act like those who are of a sound mind ; wisely, prudently, and seriously. So the metaphor is best explained. Cf. Rom. 12 : 3.

The mental sanity intended is such as becomes those who are waiting for the end spoken of ; and the general precept includes (1.) A wise consideration of their present transitory reproaches and sufferings, compared with the praise, honor and eternal glory to be given them at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 : 6, 7, 13 ; 4 : 12-14 ; 5 : 10. It would be madness to disregard the latter, because of the former. (2.) A wise consideration of the reverence, gratitude and obedience due to God, as before stated. 1 : 13 to 2 : 10. He only is in his right mind who strives to please God. (3.) A constant practical attention to the duties devolving upon them in their several places and stations ; so largely insisted on in this epistle. The end of all things calls for sanity, not insanity ; serving Christ from the heart in our various callings. Cf. 2 Pet. 1 : 5-11 ; 3 : 14.

If any, then, pervert the doctrine concerning the nearness of Christ's coming, *that* cannot be ascribed to the instructions of the apostles concerning it. And if any affirm that this doctrine naturally tends to wild and foolish actions, they are not only mistaken, but they also inadvertently censure even Him who has revealed it.

And be sober, not intoxicated. Cf. note on 1 : 13. Mental soberness consists in constantly detaching our affections from the pleasures, cares and pursuits of the wicked, and in being ever wary in this respect ; in directing our affections to the right objects, God and Christ : not drunk, like the multitude, with love of the world. Cherish mental sanity and sobriety *unto prayers*—*i.e.*, with a view to prayer of every kind on every proper occasion : or, that your prayers be not hindered, 3 : 7.

True indeed it is, that the mental sanity and sobriety required by Christ's Apostle are necessary for acceptable worship. Prayer of every kind and on every suitable occasion, whether we are alone with God, in the family, or with our brethren in Christ, is a delightful necessity to those who long to please their Creator in life and death, 4 : 19, who are glad that the great consummation is approaching, and who love the appearing of the Redeemer. 2 Tim. 4 : 8.

But before all things (giving it the first place among the duties ye owe to men) *having your love to one another fervent* ; or *intense* : holding or retaining it in all its fervor. Cf. 1 : 22, etc. ; Heb. 13 : 1. *For love will cover a multitude of sins* : intense Christian love will be like a cloak thrown over the many moral defects of your brethren ; it will conceal them from the knowledge of others, take no delight in publishing them. Peter alludes to Prov. 10 : 12. Or, as most copies read, *For love covereth*, etc. ; such is its nature and tendency : it is ever so employed.

This concealment of offences, or tender regard for a brother's reputation arising from intense Christian love, is always connected with a covering of the guilt, or forgiving

the wrong done to us ; which is all that is possible for men to forgive : and Peter no doubt remembered the startling answer Christ gave to a question on this topic once proposed by himself. Mat. 18 : 21, etc.

The sins of our brethren are to be covered, so far as unfeigned intense Christian love requires ; but it does not forbid us from honestly reminding them of their transgressions in the way described. Mat. 18 : 15-17 ; cf. Lev. 19 : 17.

Who of the redeemed and sanctified can desire to be found "biting and devouring one another," when Christ appears ? But the end of all things is nigh. And if we have no mantle to throw over a brother's sins, how can we heartily repeat the Lord's prayer ?

James. 5 : 20, speaks of a believer as instrumental in the conversion of a wanderer, and so covering his sins from the eye of God ; Peter, of covering the sins of our brethren from the eyes of men. James alludes to Ps. 32 : 1, and similar passages ; Peter to Prov. 10 : 12.

Be *hospitable to one another without murmuring*. The Apostle presents specimens of the manner in which the fervency of their love is to be shown ; not only in covering a multitude of sins, but in hospitality, and the right exercise of their various gifts. Cf. Rom. 12 : 13 ; Heb. 13 : 1-3.

Hospitality is especially necessary in a time of persecution. But it is still obligatory, according to our ability, and as we have opportunity, and especially to the pious poor. It is peculiarly dangerous to let Christ's representatives go with a wounded heart from our doors. Mat. 25 : 35, 36.

And hospitality must be *without murmuring* ; with no mutterings of a selfish and contracted spirit, or without a particle of ill-will. It must be a manifestation of fervent brotherly love. And if we cannot now entertain angels, we may those who are to be as the angels. Heb. 13 : 2 ; Lk. 20 : 36.

According as each one received (at his regeneration and baptism, Acts 10 : 44-48 ; 11 : 15-18, and by the laying on of the

Apostles' hands, Acts 8 : 15, 17 ; 19 : 6) a gift (*charisma* or gracious endowment), be ye *ministering the same to one another*, for your mutual advantage, *as is becoming good stewards of God's various grace*. For instance, *If any one speaketh*, let it be *as is becoming one uttering God's oracles* ; *if any one ministereth*, let it be *as is becoming one ministering from the strength which God supplieth* : *in order that in all* (in all His stewards with their various gifts) *God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and the dominion to the ages of ages. Amen.*

The Apostle is addressing the disciples generally, at least all those who had received some spiritual gift ; not ordinary officers of the churches, as in 5 : 1-4. These *charismata*, free gifts or gracious endowments, were then given to many believers. See I Cor. 12 ; 13 : 1, 2 ; 14 ; Rom. 12 : 6-8. Such supernatural endowments were the call and ordination of God ; He Himself setting apart persons so endowed to use such gifts as His stewards. Owing to this signal display of the Divine wisdom and goodness, the churches gathered by the apostles were differently constituted, especially as to their prophets, from any society of believers now existing.

Peter classifies the gifts as those relating to inspired teaching, or a speaking of God's oracles, cf. Acts 7 : 38 ; Rom. 3 : 2 ; Heb. 5 : 2, and those pertaining to ministry, or all forms of active service in the churches : not to the diaconate alone. (Notes on Jas. 5 : 14-18.)

As to these spiritual gifts, we are taught (1.) That they all originate from *God's grace* (*grâce*, by metonymy of the cause for the effects) : hence beautifully called *charisma* gracious endowment, from *charis*, grace. (2.) That they are various, or of many different kinds. (3.) That the gift received, whatever it be, is especially to be cultivated ; or that they should not attempt the performance of that to which their *charisma* was not adapted. The eye cannot discharge the function of the ear, nor the foot take the place of the hand. (4.) The receivers of the gifts are God's

stewards ; like overseers and distributors in His family, He alone being proprietor and master : and that as His stewards they should be kind, prudent, and faithful. Mat. 24 : 45 ; Lk. 12 : 42 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 2. (5.) The gifts must be used, not for self-ostentation or self-gratification, but for the benefit of fellow-disciples. (6.) The great aim or ultimate end to be had in view in the use of the various gifts should be to promote the glory of God through Jesus Christ ; to whom (*i.e.*, to God through Christ) of right belongs the honor for the gifts bestowed, and the dominion over all His stewards forever and ever. So be it.

These precepts of Christ's apostle, as to the general principles stated, inspiration excepted ; may justly be applied to the use of the ordinary gifts of the Spirit. (See notes on Jas. 1 : 19, 20 ; 3 : 1, 2.) If we disregard these precepts, the speaking will be self-seeking, and other services the garments of hypocrisy.

7. *The consummation of all things is nigh* : To explain this of the destruction of our world as a habitable globe, is to make the Apostle contradict himself. 2 Ep. 3 : 13. To interpret it of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army, of the dispersion of the Israelites, and the overthrow of their church-state, is preposterous. See Acts 3 : 19-21. Isa. 11th and 12th chapters ; Ezek. 34th, 36th, and 37th chapters. To say that the death of individuals is meant, does violence to the context, vs. 5, 13. And who can believe that the death of men is the end of all things, or the great consummation of God's purpose, as foretold by prophets and apostles ? *Sophroneo* is best translated literally = to be sound-minded, or of a sound mind ; since the precise shade of thought depends on the topic in hand, and the near context. Here, wisdom or holy prudence is especially denoted. 8. L S will cover ; A B K syr cop vg covereth. 9. A B S syr vg murmuring ; K L murmurings. 10. *According as*, etc. Use the gift received, and in accordance with the measure or degree of it imparted. *As*, thrice used, is a logical particle = as is becoming.

11. The ellipsis must be supplied from the preceding verb, as in Rom. 12 : 6-8. If any one speaketh, as is becoming (one speaking) God's oracles. *From* the strength, etc., from that as from a fountain supplied by God. The strength intended seems to refer both to bodily and mental vigor, or "the ability which God giveth." *Kratos*, power

as exercised in dominion ; so in 5 : 11 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 16 ; Rev. 1 : 6, the dominion arising from the omnipotence of the Holy One.

The general classification of the *charismata*, as Peter states it, is easy to be understood ; cf. Rom. 12 : 6-8—viz., inspired teaching, and active service, or supernatural endowments qualifying for such service. But when we attempt to arrange the particular gifts under these classes the difficulty begins. See Schaff's Hist. Apost. Ch. ; Hodge on 1 Cor. 12, and Olshausen ; Henderson on Inspiration. Paul, in 1 Cor. 12, seems to designate three classes, two of them distinguished by *hetero* ; but the third division is a subdivision of the first.

¹² Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you : ¹³ but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings ; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. ¹⁴ If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye* ; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you : [on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified] ¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. ¹⁶ Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed ; but let him glorify God on this behalf. ¹⁷ For the time is *come* that judgment must begin at the house of God : and if it first *begin* at us, what *shall* the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God ? ¹⁸ And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ? ¹⁹ Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

In this paragraph, and other passages of the epistle, there are manifest allusions to the persecution in the reign of Nero. (1.) It was a persecution not by private men, but by those in authority ; hence it was necessary for them to be always ready for a defence to every one asking or requiring it, as an officer of the government. 3 : 15, 16, with 2 : 12-15. (2.) It was a persecution in which they were falsely accused as evil-doers ; ver. 15, with 3 : 16 ; 2 : 12—*i.e.*, as enemies to the state and mankind, criminals and political offenders : but the Roman emperors and their subordinate officers did not, before the time of Nero, bring

such a slanderous charge against the disciples of our Lord. (3.) It was a persecution in which they suffered, or endured painful deaths, under that false accusation : some were clothed with skins and torn to pieces by dogs, others were crucified, others at night were fastened to stakes, covered with combustible materials, and burned to death. “Think not strange of *the burning* among you.” (4.) It was a persecution in which they suffered as *Christians*, or followers of Christ. (5.) And this judgment of the disciples, according to the permission and purpose of God, then *began* : it was the *first* persecution of Christians, ver. 17. (6.) It was a persecution to be followed by the same kind of sufferings among the brotherhood in the world, 5 : 9. All which particulars agree with the Neronian Persecution, and with no other. (Hug. Int. N. T. by Fosdick. Tacitus. An. XV. Juvenal. Sat. I. Pone Tigellinum, etc.)

The Exhortation : Be not amazed at the severity of the persecution to which you as Christians are now exposed, but rejoice. Melancholy surprise and terror are forbidden ; holy joy, arising from the anticipation of their pre-eminent bliss at Christ’s glorious advent, is commanded. Lit., *Beloved* (so He intimates His holy sympathy with them), *think not strange of the burning among you* (Christians, ver. 16, a part of the brotherhood, 5 : 9), *it being for a trial to you ; as if a strange thing is happening to you* : Be not astonished at the burning of Christians, your brethren in Christ, the burning well known to you ; since even that awful mode of suffering is designed by God to try you, or put to the greatest test the genuineness of your faith, and other graces inseparably connected with it. Do not deem that unaccountable, however painful it may be, which is permitted to demonstrate beyond all debate your faith in and love to Jesus Christ.

It *being* for a trial to you : it is a causal participle = since it is. *The burning* : so it is rightly translated, Rev. 18 : 9, 18, where only it occurs elsewhere in the N. T. Our translators render it here by “fiery trial,” which some

commend ; but that is an explanation, not a translation. And as an explanation, it is tautological : the fiery *trial*, *for a trial* ! To escape this, some hold that *the burning* is a metaphorical expression, and means simply any severe persecution or affliction. But when our brothers, long since with Christ, were burned to death at Rome, to please an incarnate demon ; it was a *literal burning*, a burning of *Christians*, and the *first* instance of it in the Roman Empire, vs. 16, 17.

The positive form of the precept : *But, so far as ye partake of the sufferings of the Christ, rejoice ; that ye also at the revelation of His glory may rejoice, exulting.* To partake of the sufferings of Christ, is not to have a part in His peculiar sufferings as the Redeemer, 2 : 24 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 13 ; but the expression relates to sufferings of the same general nature—namely, for righteousness' sake, 3 : 14, 17 ; 4 : 19, endured with the same disposition, 2 : 20-23, and with the same holy and inflexible determination to please God, whatever may occur, 4 : 1, as Peter himself explains it in the passages referred to. So far only can we share in Messiah's sufferings. They are called the sufferings *of Christ* because of the union, legal and spiritual, that exists between Him and believers, 2 : 4, 5 ; 3 : 16, and the consequent sympathy which He feels towards the members of His body, the church, and especially when they are persecuted. Acts 9 : 4 ; Heb. 4 : 15.

Gladness, not terror and astonishment, becomes persecuted disciples ; for they have communion with Christ in His sufferings ; being conformed to His death, and the circumstances preceding it. Phil. 3 : 10 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 14-17. To be like Christ in any thing, and especially in suffering for well-doing, is a good ground for holy gladness. Besides, the greater our moral conformity to Christ in sufferings, the more abundant will be our exultation when He unveils His glory. This is the joy of hope.

Let those be amazed and sad who wish that Christ may never come ; but those calm and glad, even at the burning

stake, who suffer for well-doing, and long for the revelation of His glory.

If ye are reproached in the name of Christ, reviled as bearing His name ; accounted by foolish men as evil-doers ; if they falsely say that criminals and Christians describe the same persons, *blessed* are ye ; *because the Spirit of Glory, even the Spirit of God, resteth upon you*. We understand it thus : Ye are blest, because the Spirit inseparably connected with the glory just spoken of, even the Spirit of God, rests upon you. Lit., *maketh Himself to rest*, stops His flight, or descends and abides upon you : a most beautiful metaphor. Cf. Isa. 11 : 2 ; Num. 11 : 25, 26. The Spirit, by giving believers a disposition and will like that of Christ, is the Spirit of Glory, or the author of it : their inward meetness for the objective glory, or their mental preparation for beholding and sharing in Christ's glory, being the peculiar work of the Spirit. (Cf. 5 : 10 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 13, 14 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 18. So God honors you in the midst of these reproaches, and hence ye are emphatically blessed.

The abiding of the Spirit upon the persecuted often becomes conspicuous by the commingled meekness and holy boldness that make their faces shine like that of an angel. Acts 6 : 15. [On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.] It is very doubtful whether these words are a part of the original text, since they are not found in most of the ancient manuscripts and versions. The sense : By your persecutors Christ, or the Spirit, is blasphemed, but by you He is praised and adored. But the persecutors spoken of did not blaspheme the Spirit, but reproached men in the name of Christ, which Peter had already said ; and hence the internal evidence, as well as the external is against their genuineness.

I speak of being reproached in Christ's name and partaking of His sufferings ; *for let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as an intermeddler ; but if any one suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but glorify God in this name ;* in consequence of bearing this

name, and acting in accordance with it. Although it is infamous to die as a criminal, yet it is a ground of thanksgiving to God to die as becomes a Christian.

The name *Christian* occurs elsewhere only at Acts 26 : 28 ; 11 : 26, although there is an allusion to it in Jas. 2 : 7 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 19. *The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch* ; not by themselves, for they were wont to say believers and brothers ; not by the Jews, for they called the disciples of Christ Galileans and Nazarenes ; but by the Romans, as the termination of the word intimates (Tac., Ann. xv. 44). It is a historic term, used at first by those outside of the church, in order to designate the followers of Christ, in distinction from men of the Pagan, or Jewish religion. And the disciples did not *suffer as Christians*, or by that name, until the reign of Nero. So unmistakable is the Apostle's allusion to the first persecution of the disciples by that monster's orders.

We are here reminded of Pliny's remarkable words concerning the persecution that occurred not long after Peter's death in Pontus and Bithynia. He inquires of the Emperor Trajan, "whether *the name itself*, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only belonging to the name, *ought to be punished*" —i.e., whether one should be put to death simply because he is a Christian, and will not join in the prevailing idol-worship, although his political and moral conduct be unexceptionable. To which the Emperor replies in the affirmative.

The Apostle distinguishes the murderer, thief, and evil-doer (any other violator of wholesome law), from *the intermeddler*. The former class sin presumptuously ; the latter, through infirmity. Lit., an inspector of what belongs to another ; hence a busybody in other men's matters, an intermeddler in things relating to religion, a self-constituted inspector and would-be director of another man's conscience.

Some of the disciples addressed, from misguided zeal,

even when acting from a real desire to gain men for Christ, might, by pertinaciously and unseasonably urging the doctrines and duties of Christianity on those who scornfully rejected it, stir up the malice of men so as to bring on themselves condemnation and death. And hence the warning of the Apostle is not out of place.

If any one suffer as a Christian, let him in so dying glorify God : *because it is the time* (the season, or the fit and appointed time) *of the beginning of the judgment from the house of God* : the time appointed for this persecution of Christians to begin. It is the proper time, therefore, for you to glorify Him by your suffering, or death. *The* before-mentioned *judgment*, vs. 12-16 ; the Apostle speaking of the persecution as a chastisement or correction of the house or family of God. (*House*, as often, by metonymy for the dwellers in it.) Cf. 1 Cor. 11 : 30-34.

But if first from us, what the end of them that disobey the Gospel of God? But if such a judgment first falls on us who are a part of God's family, if it now begins in His house, what will be the final state of those who refuse to believe and obey the Gospel of God ? *And if the righteous is with difficulty saved*, finds it no easy matter to persevere in well-doing and die for it, ver. 19, *the ungodly and the sinner, where will he appear?* Where will they be seen who now throw the reins on the neck of their lusts ? Not, surely, in the paradise of the disembodied blest ; not in the congregation of the righteous ; not with Christ on the renovated earth. Lk. 23 : 43 ; Ps. 1 : 5 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 13 ; 2 : 9. These animated questions express in the clearest and most emphatic manner the hopeless doom of the incorrigible, of the obstinate unbeliever and sinner. And the implied motive is : Let their last awful state make you dread and suppress all thoughts of apostacy. (Heb. 3 : 6, 14.)

A general conclusion, or practical direction, derived from the whole preceding context : *Wherefore let even them that suffer* (who are not only reproached in Christ's name, but who also die as Christians,) *according to the will of God*, 3 : 17,

according to His purpose and permission as the Sovereign of the universe, *as to a faithful Creator commit* (intrust as a deposit in His hands) *their souls*, persevering till then *in well-doing*.

God is not here spoken of as *the Creator* of men in general, but only of the righteous, and especially of the persecuted righteous ; their Creator in a pregnant sense, or the author of their natural and spiritual life. Jas. 1 : 17, 18 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 3, 23 ; Eph. 2 : 10. He is the *faithful* Creator, because all that He has promised to His people will in the fittest season be bestowed on them. The Creator fainteth not, neither is weary, a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. Isa. 40 : 28 ; Deut. 32 : 4. Accordingly, when we trust in His power, lean on His promises, and persevere in well-doing, the most painful and shameful death is shorn of its terrors.

Having shown the coherence of the several verses, it may not be amiss to give a synoptical view of the whole context. *The Exhortation* : Be not amazed that Christians now die even by fire, but rejoice. *The Motives* : 1. That ought not to be thought strange which is designed to test in the most unequivocal manner the genuineness of your faith in and love to Jesus Christ. 2. Rejoice, because you have communion with Christ in His sufferings, and so far as that is the case, ye will have pre-eminent and overflowing bliss at His second glorious advent. 3. Your being reviled in Christ's name should open the fountain of joy in your hearts, since the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you. Such a signal honor from God should take off the edge of all human reproaches. 4. Rejoice, for although it is infamous to die as a criminal, yet it is a ground of thanksgiving to God to die as a Christian. 5. It is not strange that this judgment or chastisement befalls you, inasmuch as God, in holiness and love, trains and disciplines His children for eternal glory ; and now the appointed time for the severest chastisement has begun. 6. Be not astonished, but hold fast your confidence in Christ to the end ; for how is it possible to portray

in human language the final and hopeless condition of those who disobey the Gospel of God, or the doom of the ungodly and vile sinner? *Conclusion*: Wherefore persevere in well-doing, and even when dying in Christ's name, intrust your souls to Him who is your loving, faithful, and omnipotent Father.

12. The burning, *te purosei*, the dative either designating the object, or the cause; the sense either way being the same. *As if a strange thing is going with you*, meeting with you, or befalling you; as if ye were persuaded that an unaccountable calamity is happening to, or overtaking you, disciples of Christ. *As* with the genitive absolute, is here expressive of subjective conviction. Cf. 2 Pet. 1 : 3. Winer, § 65. 9.

13. A B K L S Did Oec Thph *katho* = according to what, up to a certain point or degree; hence, *so far as*. Elsewhere, it denotes measure or proportion. Rom. 8 : 26; 2 Cor. 8 : 12. *At the revelation of His glory*. His glory as the Christ, the King and Judge. Cf. 4 : 5; 5 : 4; 2 Ep. 1 : 11. 14. Lit., *The Spirit of Glory and that of God*: so B K L with c. t. S has The Spirit of his glory and power and that of God; A, The Spirit of glory and power and that of God. The versions vary greatly. The reading of the c. t. is the more difficult one, and the other readings seem, as explanations, to have originated from it. The words enclosed in brackets are not found in A B S syr cop vg, but they are in K L sah.

16. A B S syr vg in this name; K L, as c. t., in this part—*i.e.*, assigned part = lot or portion, as in Mat. 24 : 51; Rev. 21 : 8. So Steiger, who prefers c. t. 17. The forms of expression seem to have been suggested by Ezek. 9 : 6. Cf. Amos 3 : 2. 18. Peter, without directly citing, makes use of Prov. 11 : 31, according to the Sept. 19. A B S cop vg omit *as*, K L syr have it. *Kai* connects with and gives emphasis to *hoi paschontes*. Well doing: they do well who return good for evil, and persevere in it, 3 : 9.

CHAPTER V.

Synopsis of Contents :

1. Admonitions to the Presbyters, 1-4.
2. Concluding exhortations, 5-11.
3. Postscript, 12-14.

¹The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder; and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: ²feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thercof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. ⁴And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

With a few strokes of his pen, the Apostle has here designated the main duties of the Christian ministry, and the manner of performing them; and in so doing he has warned them of the sins to which they are peculiarly exposed; enforcing his exhortation by his own relations to those addressed, by the relations of the flock to God and Christ, and by the glory which faithful under-shepherds shall obtain at the appearing of the Chief Shepherd.

The persons addressed are the presbyters or *Elders* of the churches in Asia Minor. They are *officers* of the churches; as is evident from the fact that they are distinguished from *the flock* of God among them, the flock of which Christ is the Chief Shepherd. The same thing is evident from *the duties* required of them, to tend the flock as pastors or shepherds, and inspecting or overseeing it as bishops; and from the fact that they are *Christ's under-shepherds*. These metaphorical expressions are of frequent occurrence, and easily

understood. *The flock among you* = private Christians or believers in the five provinces. *The flock of God*: belonging to Him, His peculium or special property. *The Chief Shepherd*, the supreme ruler of the church by right of redemption, the Shepherd and Bishop of souls. Cf. Jno. 10. Again, they are *co-elders* with the Apostle; and hence teachers and rulers of the churches must be intended, 2 and 3 Jno.

Duties required, and the manner of performing them. *Tend the flock of God among you*, act the part of shepherds, or pastors, to the flock. The verb expresses the whole duty of a shepherd, to lead the flock to pasture, keep it from wandering into dangerous paths, and protecting it from wolves and other wild beasts. See Lk. 17 : 7; 1 Cor. 9 : 7, and Jno. 21 : 16, to which Peter especially alludes. Cf. Acts 20 : 28. That ruling, as well as teaching, is included, appears from Mat. 2 : 6; Eph. 4 : 11; 1 Tim. 5 : 17. *Tend the flock of God among you*, *inspecting* it; by acting as its bishops—*i.e.*, overseers or inspectors; kindly caring for its present and eternal well-being. Pastors then are = bishops—*i.e.*, teachers and rulers of the flock, not diocesan bishops. So Acts 20 : 17, 28; Tit. 1 : 5, 7. Discharging the duty of bishops, *not by constraint, but willingly*. The reference is to the necessity imposed by the nature and circumstances of the case: Do not discharge your duties as teachers and rulers outwardly and mechanically, or because your official station says you must, but with right good-will. What does it profit to go through a round of duties negligently and formally? To give every thing but the heart to those for whom the Good Shepherd gave His life? *Not for the sake of base gain, but of a ready mind*; not from avaricious motives, but with the prompt zeal of love. It is the characteristic of a true minister of Christ to abhor and shun all covetousness; of a false teacher, to assume the garb of piety as a means of promoting his secular interests. 1 Thes. 2 : 5; 1 Tim. 6 : 5-11; Tit. 1 : 11; 2 Pet. 2 : 3.

Neither as lording it over the heritages, not acting as kings and despots over those particular congregations, or portions of the flock, that are assigned by God to your ministerial oversight and care, *but being patterns to the flock*, models of every virtue to the people of God, and the sheep of Christ.

The verb primarily means to master, overpower, Acts 19 : 16 ; hence to exercise civil authority, act as lords, kings, or rulers, Mat. 20 : 25 ; cf. Lk. 22 : 25, Gr. The expression, then, implies that the Elders have authority under Christ to teach and rule according to His Word, yet their authority is not, like that of kings and princes, to be enforced by bodily pains and penalties, or by any forms of oppression and tyranny ; but by truth and love, and as Christ commands. Mat. 28 : 20. *Cleroi* (whence *clerici*, our "clergy" and "clerk,") = lots ; hence allotted portions : here, parts of the flock assigned to the care of the Presbyters in Asia Minor. There seems to be an allusion to such passages as Deut. 9 : 29 ; 32 : 9, and all but the blind may see that here it means, not inferior ministers, but the flock of God, or the sheep of Christ : they are "the clergy," according to the Apostle Peter. Wherever they live, they are portions of God's inheritance. "All things are yours ; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas : " all ministers, with all their gifts, are not tyrants over your faith, but are helpers of your joy. 1 Cor. 3 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 24. The elders were made and redeemed by the Chief Shepherd, and endowed with various gifts by the Spirit, not to lord it over the flock, but to be kind and careful under shepherds ; living, acting and, if need be, suffering, not so much for themselves, as for those who are Christ's, and whom He has in a special manner committed to their oversight and loving care.

It thus appears that the three great sins to which the presbyters are in a special manner exposed, are heartless formality and negligence, avarice, and the lust of power or unholy ambition : and the admonitions of the Apostle con-

cerning them are as necessary to be heeded now, as when first written.

Motives : 1. From his own relations to those addressed. *The elders that are among you I exhort, who am a co-elder, or fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of the Christ, a partaker also of the glory about to be revealed.* The two former are official titles ; the latter, a description of his character as a believer.

Peter calls himself *a co-elder*, not as an over-modest term of no meaning, for his words, like Paul's, well out of a pure heart, 2 Cor. 2 : 17 ; not in an ironical manner, like the papal designation, "a servant of servants," which really means a tyrant over menials ; but to show that in certain respects he was their colleague : I, who am a teacher and ruler, understand well the difficult duties of your office, and have therefore a right to entreat, warn, and cheer you in the performance of them.

A witness of the Messiah's sufferings : thus delicately reminding them of his higher office as an apostle, and his duty as such. Cf. 2 Ep. 1 : 13. The word witness being applied especially to the apostles as testifying to the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus. Lk. 24 : 46-48 ; Acts 2 : 32 ; 10 : 36-43. Peter mentions that he was a witness of the sufferings of Christ, in order to show the great importance of what he had before said, 1 : 18, etc. ; 2 : 21-25 ; 3 : 18. I as an apostle know well that Jesus is the Christ, and that He bore the sins of the elders and the flock ; and His love thus shown sweetly urges me to give you this exhortation.

A partaker also of the glory about to be revealed ; sharing with you in the sanctifying operations of the Spirit of Glory ; having the disposition of the glorified already implanted in our souls, and so assured of our soon partaking of Christ's glory. Glory, by metonymy, for the earnest of it. 2 Cor. 5 : 5.

2. From the relations of the flock to God and to Christ. Ye are not masters or owners of the heritages ; they belong

to God, and have Christ for their chief or supreme ruler ; to whom ye are responsible.

3. The last motive is derived from the glory which faithful pastors are to obtain at the second appearing of Him who is the Redeemer and Lord of the church. *And, as a consequence or gracious reward of thus tending and inspecting the flock among you, when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, ye shall receive the unfading crown of glory :* the crown consisting of glory, the glory of kings and priests in Christ's everlasting kingdom—not like the withering garlands of victors in the games so well known to you, but fresh and green to all eternity. Cf. 1 Cor. 9 : 24-27.

Peter, writing to dispersed Israelites, very naturally alludes to such passages as Ezek. 34 : 23-31 ; 37 : 24-28 ; Jer. 23 : 3-8 ; cf. Isa. 11 and 12 ; Jno. 10 : 16, Gr. ("one flock, one shepherd").

The flock is the church which the Redeemer bought with His own blood, Acts 20 : 28, and the Elders, pastors, or bishops, in tending that flock, or the portions assigned to them as under-shepherds, *should feed them with the unadulterated Word of God ;* not with any false and deceitful philosophy, or mere traditional theology, and commandments of men. 1 : 23 ; 2 : 2 ; Col. 2.

The pretended successors of Peter have put apocryphal writings, and merely human, falsely called apostolical, traditions on a level with the Holy Scriptures ; and some who call themselves Protestant ministers are now busy in undermining the authority of Sacred Scripture, explaining away or denying the fact that is a revelation from God written by inspired men, or a revelation infallibly made known to us. If so, Christ, and the apostles, and the prophets, were mistaken—while all that is left is a bundle of myths, prosaic and poetic, of a moral sort indeed, but only of human authority. Such men are infidels, "lepers in saintly garb," in the church, but not of it. It becomes faithful Presbyters to oppose and refuse such, and never to teach any thing but what is clearly and unmistakably con-

tained in "the Word of Christ." How else can we meet with His approbation in the great day? How else can they who are His be nourished unto eternal life?

Pastors should not only teach the pure Word of God, but, as far as may be in their power and according to their several gifts, *the whole of that Word*; or give those intrusted to their care an accurate outline of all the great leading truths of Divine Revelation. This they might do by expounding the plan of Redemption as historically unfolded in Scripture; or by didatico-practical discourses on the great truths contained in Holy Writ, thus presenting the people with a system of Biblical theology: or, by expositions of the Gospels and Epistles; or by all these methods.

The nature and extent of human duty, with the motives by which it is impressed on the conscience, may be happily set forth in an exposition of the decalogue; and the duties of those who profess and call themselves Christians in every relation of life; by the exposition of the apostolic epistles; as well as by the explications of the law everywhere appearing in the Word.

And with these Epistles, they should not forget to join explanations of that inspired liturgy, the Book of Psalms, in order to delineate as accurately as possible the work of the Spirit in the heart, and to inflame the soul with all the affections that are due to God and Christ.

And the wonderful purposes of God as to our world and the chosen that are revealed in the prophetic Scriptures of the O. and N. T., it is their duty to study and explain: otherwise, the hope of the church will be based on human conjectures instead of leaning on the Oracles of God. 2 Pet. 1 : 16-21; Rev. 1 : 3.

How much more delightful and profitable would pastoral instruction become, if in these and similar ways they always fed the flock of God! What an excellent help and stimulus it would be in furthering the intelligent and devout reading of God's most truthful and holy Word!

The presbyters ought also to *defend* the flock from the dangerous assaults of wolves in sheep's clothing ; and to this end thrust the sword of the Spirit into the heart of those systems which subvert the Gospel of Christ. Otherwise, many will be turned away from the truth, and embrace fables. Acts 20 : 29, 30 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 1-4 ; Tit. 1 : 9-11.

Also, to *guard* it lest it stray from the way of duty prescribed by God ; and if any so wander, to bring them back by kind and timely admonitions, and when necessary by discipline, according to the laws of Christ : not by civil pains and penalties, after the manner of apostate hierarchies. 1 Cor. 5 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 1-11.

They should also *lead* the flock by their beautiful, holy, and consistent life ; their footsteps, as well as precepts, showing the way to life and glory with Christ.

1. After presbyters K L syr cop have *tous* as c. t. ; S *oun tous* ; A B *vg oun*. If *oun* be genuine, the reference seems to be to 4 : 19, hinting at the necessity of their persevering in well-doing even unto death. *A partaker also of the glory*, etc. Some have strangely supposed an allusion to the Transfiguration of our Lord ; but of that the three apostles were spectators, not partakers. 2. A K L syr cop *vg episkopountes* ; B S omit : B willingly, as c. t., A S *vg* willingly according to God. *The Chief Shepherd* : If our Lord gave Peter a supremacy of power and jurisdiction over the rest of the apostles, or made him pope over the apostolic college, and intended that power and jurisdiction to be transmitted to others ; it is passing strange that Peter himself should be wholly ignorant of it, and never once mention it in either of his epistles, or in any of his discourses recorded by Luke in the Acts. Blinded men insist on the Supremacy and even on the Infallibility of the pope ; Peter emphatically declares that Christ alone is the Chief Shepherd. It may not be amiss to add that nothing is gained by putting scientists so called (there is an omen in the nomen, 1 Tim. 6 : 20, 21,) in the pope's chair, or receiving their dogmas in matters of faith as infallible. Infinitely better is it to trust in the Chief Shepherd, and be guided by His Oracles.

A co-elder : The apostles were inspired teachers and rulers of the church universal ; the elders, expounders of the Scriptures, and governors according to Christ's laws of particular congregations, or portions of the flock of God. That the office of Presbyter-bishops or pastors is of divine institution, is evident from 1 Cor. 12 : 28. " And some

(some believers or members of Christ's body, ver. 27) God set (appointed) in the church : first, apostles ; secondly, prophets ; thirdly, *teachers*." The apostles were permanently inspired, and held the first rank in the universal church ; the prophets were occasionally inspired, and stood next to the apostles ; the teachers, not inspired, but expounders of the writings of apostles and prophets ; but all set in the church by God. Also, from Eph. 4 : 11, where *pastors and teachers*, as well as apostles, prophets, and evangelists, are described as Christ's ascension gift to the church ; and from Acts 20 : 17, 28, where their appointment is attributed to the Holy Spirit.

That *ruling* as well as *teaching elders* are here included in the term *presbyters*, though not absolutely certain, is highly probable ; since Peter writes to dispersed Israelites, to whom the name and office of presbyters was familiar. And 1 Tim. 5 : 17 speaks of Elders that rule well, and of Elders that labor in word and doctrine—of the same rank or grade in the church, if so you please, but of different functions. Neither can the *governments* (metonymy of the abstract for the concrete term) or *governors which God has set in the church* mean rulers in the state, but ruling elders. 1 Cor. 12 : 28 ; cf. notes on Jas. 5 : 14.

⁶ Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility : for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

The younger neoteroi : Since the term presbyters or *elders* is sometimes a name of office, like our "senators" and "aldermen," and sometimes = older or the aged, interpreters differ as to the meaning of elders and the younger as here used. (1.) Some say that the younger mean the people or members of the churches ; the opposite of the elders before-mentioned. And if pastors and teachers are called elders or the elder, there is no incongruity in supposing the people to be designated by the younger : but this is not supported by usage ; for in Lk. 22 : 26, sometimes appealed to, it is not necessary to take the two clauses in the same signification. (2.) Others make the younger = inferior orders of the clergy, in the modern sense of that term, and suppose that deacons are especially intended. But in Acts 5 : 6, the *neoteroi* are = the *neaniskoi*, ver. 10, and the younger members of the church are denoted. (3.) Younger

disciples as opposed to older disciples, who were in Christ before them. Acts 21 : 16 ; Rom. 16 : 7. But there will be no absurdity if we combine the third interpretation with the first, inasmuch as the Elders were generally more advanced in years than the members of the churches.

The submission or subjection required is not a slavish obedience ; but it stands opposed to the conceit, self-will and rash zeal that are too characteristic of the young, and which expose them to many snares and dangers. But they have only a form of godliness who are despisers of the good, heady and high-minded. 2 Tim. 3. He then who will not listen to an aged disciple, or to a presbyter unfolding Christ's Word, may well doubt whether he is a disciple at all.

Likewise : By this word, in connection with the preceding context, soul-stirring motives are suggested : From the same regard to Apostolic authority, with similar alacrity, earnestness and love, and especially from a regard to the unfading crown of glory, 1 : 13 ; 4 : 13, do ye the younger obey those who have longer known and loved the Saviour, and the pastors, so far as they teach what the Chief Shepherd has commanded. Mat. 28 : 20.

Yea, all (whether younger or older, teachers or taught,) *submitting to one another, clothe yourselves with humility.* Let a lowly mind be as conspicuous as the apron of a servant, and show that humility by modest deference to one another in all you say or do : taking the lead in honoring one another, as Paul, by another metaphor, expresses the same thought. Rom. 12 : 10. Lit., put on humility as an *enkomboma*, which was an apron worn by slaves, and put over the *exomis*, a sleeveless garment. The Apostle perhaps alludes to the manner in which Christ by symbolical actions, in performing the duties of the lowliest slave, taught most impressively humility and condescending practical love. Jno. 13. Certainly, it was a scene which Peter could not forget, since at first he was rather "stiffnecked in his humility."

The motive follows : *because God arrayeth Himself against*

the proud, but to the lowly He giveth grace. Prov. 3 : 34 ; cited also by Jas. 4 : 6. The Almighty is the enemy of the arrogant and insolently irreverent, but the friend of the humble. *Grace*, by metonymy, for tokens of His favor : grace at the starting-point, grace by the way, and grace at the end ; even the grace of Life, the grace to be put in our hands at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 3 : 7 ; 1 : 13 ; grace from the God of all grace, 5 : 10.

Who is not in danger from pride ? 2 Cor. 12 : 7. To whom is not humility becoming ? Who can justify the exhibition of haughtiness to any, even the feeblest of the flock ? We should ever remember that the unfading crown of glory is for the lowly, not for the proud ; for none of the proud, and especially not for scorers : and that He before whom our hearts are to be manifested is Himself meek and lowly in heart. Mat. 11 : 29 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 5.

A B S syr cop vg omit submitting ; K L Oec Thph have it, and Polycarp, § 10, seems to allude to it. The weight of the historical evidence is decidedly against it ; and so read, the sense is : Make your humility, as an *encomboma*, conspicuous to one another. But either way, the thought remains the same. *Enkombosasthe*, here only in N. T. We prefer the explanation above given ; but the difficulty as to the derivation has originated various explanations. See Poli Synopsis, Steiger, Lillie ; Liddell and Scott, Robinson, Bretschneider, s. v. If taken from *kombos*, a strip of cloth, then *encomboma* is = an apron, and *enkombosasthe* means put on an *encomboma*.

But in Suidas *kombomata* are = ornaments. Hence some render, Adorn yourselves with humility. And it is beautiful, to see all in the church by love serving one another.

Theodotion, at Isa. 3 : 20, has *enkombomata* for the Hebrew word, meaning girdles. (Eng. Vers., headbands.) Hence some translate, Gird on humility. Benson : put on humility as an upper garment. Owing to this difficulty about settling the precise allusion contained in the verb, it seems best to translate, Put on, or clothe yourselves with humility. S has *tois* before *presbuterois*, but B as c. t. Vulgate, insinuate, a mistake of some who seem to have read *enkolposasthe* = make full and round, like the folds of a robe on the bosom ; hence, make prominent, render conspicuous. The Rhemish N. T. : insinuate humility one to another ; which a mere English reader would find it difficult to understand.

⁶ Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time : ⁷ casting all your care upon him ; for he careth for you. ⁸ Be sober, be vigilant ; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour : ⁹ whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

The Apostle, hastening to the close of his epistle, exhorts them as disciples exposed to martyrdom to cultivate humble resignation to God, implicit confidence in Him, with sobriety, vigilance, and holy boldness.

1. Cultivate unfeigned resignation : Lit., *Be humbled—i.e.*, by your own will and act, = *take a low place*. To take a low place under the mighty hand of God, by substitution, for cheerful submission or voluntary resignation to severe persecution, as permitted and directed by the Almighty. 4 : 19, 3 : 17. (The hand of God used in judging or chastising His house, 4 : 17.) *To lift up*, or exalt, taking you from your prostrate position, is used by the same figure for a glorious deliverance, or exemption from persecution with signal honor. The contrast between the present pressure of God's mighty hand and their future lifting up by the same, is exceedingly beautiful. (This is a very ancient interpretation ; being found in the Epistle concerning the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne. See Lardner, vol. ii., p. 164.)

In the Epistle of James the scope, and some expressions are different. James speaks of prostration of soul before the Lord, but not of the peculiar exercise of that spirit when suffering under God's mighty hand ; James addresses sinners and the double-minded ; Peter, persecuted believers. James calls to repentance or conversion ; Peter, to resignation : in the former there is a promise of forgiveness ; in the latter, of deliverance. (Notes on James 4 : 10.)

Our Lord uses the same scriptural axiom for divers ends—*e.g.*, to inculcate modesty before men, Lk. 14 : 11, and an humble reliance on the mercy of God, 18 : 14. A woman's

eye (to use an illustration suggested by an able writer is beautiful as it flashes in its natural socket, but pluck it out, isolate it on a tablet, and its power is gone ; and so it is with texts of Holy Writ glittering in their natural context, or torn violently from the same.

Motives : Humble yourselves under God's mighty hand ; (a) for He is the enemy of the proud, but the friend of the lowly : implied in *therefore* : ver. 5. (b) Opposition to God's will as manifested in His providence is both sinful and vain : the hand of the Holy One is mighty. (c) Lowly submission is necessary to your deliverance, necessary as a means to gain that end : take a low place under the mighty hand of God, *in order that* He may lift you up, etc. (d) If ye humble yourselves as aforesaid, God will, at the appointed time and in the fittest season, grant you complete deliverance.

In infinite wisdom and love God appoints the beginning and the end of all our trials. Who knows so well as He how severe they should be, or how long they should continue ?

2. Exercise always an implicit and unwavering confidence in God : *casting all your anxiety upon Him*. The order in the Greek is : All your anxiety casting upon Him. Whether *casting upon God* be considered as a metaphor or a substitution, the allusion is to a burden. (Ps. 55 : 22.) The participle seems to depend on the verb that precedes : *Humble yourselves*, etc., *casting* (once for all—aor. part.) all your anxiety upon Him—*i.e.*, with uncomplaining resignation to the will of the Almighty, ever combine unwavering faith in Him as your Father in Christ.

The Motive : *because He Himself careth for you* : lit., because there is to Him a care about you. *Careth* is a metaphor, descriptive of God's tender practical love to His people, and especially when persecuted : the mighty hand with the loving heart ; and this is perfectly natural, since care arises from love in an earthly parent. He careth for you whose mighty hand is pressing heavily upon you : while He chastises, He loves.

In a time of persecution such thoughts as these spring up in the soul : What will become of our wives and children, if they survive us ? And shall we ourselves glorify God by a suitable disposition, when led as sheep to the slaughter ? Or shall we be of the number of those who are suddenly overwhelmed with dread of a painful and shameful death ? Now, says the Apostle, All this your carefulness throw off upon God. It is a burden too heavy for you to bear ; neither is there any need of your bearing it, for God loveth and provideth for them that are His. Trust wholly in your loving Father, leaving all in His hands.

We cast our anxiety upon God by faith and prayer ; trusting in His promises for support and deliverance, and crying for the help of the Spirit, or for grace suited to our condition and circumstances. Jas. 1 : 5-8 ; Heb. 4 : 16, Gr.

To cast all our anxiety upon God, is not to keep a part of it on ourselves. This is to dishonor God by doubting His Word, and to become the voluntary authors and promoters of our own misery. Cf. Phil. 4 : 6, 7.

Care or prudent foresight is not forbidden ; but all anxiety is ; since distressing forebodings are the offspring of unbelief.

3. Be sober, vigilant, and bold in withstanding the devil. Metaphors in Be sober, keep awake, and withstand. *Be sober* : cf. notes on 1 : 13, 4 : 7. Detach your affections from the world, or be sober as to all earthly pursuits and pleasures ; not stupefied with the wine of the ungodly. *Keep awake*, or, *Be awake*, the opposite of to be asleep ; as at Mk. 14 : 34, 37, 38 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 6, 10. " Let us not sleep as the rest, but keep awake and be sober. Whether we are awake or asleep." (Eng. Vers., generally " watch.") Act not only as the sober, but as sentinels or watchmen who keep awake. Use all your faculties in the best manner, test motives and suggestions ; be on the constant lookout for danger and prepared to avoid it. So clearly does Christ's Apostle teach us that implicit confidence in God must be and is united with mental sobriety and watchful-

ness. This faith in God sobers us as to worldly love, and expels heedlessness.

Because is omitted by the best authorities ; leaving the sense unchanged, but making the exhortation more animated. The motive or argument enforcing the exhortation : You have an active, deceitful, and malignant enemy to encounter ; “ the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” *Your adversary the devil* : your accuser or slanderer, which is the meaning of *diabolos*, rendered devil : *antidikos* is strictly = adversary, opponent in a law suit, Mat. 5 : 25 ; Lk. 12 : 58 ; and it is explained by some as = an enemy in general, here and at Lk. 18 : 3. But the last passage agrees in sense with the others ; and Peter uses *antidikos* simply as a translation of *Satan*, the great enemy, as well as accuser, of the redeemed. Cf. Rev. 20 : 2 ; Job. 1 : 6, etc. *The devil* is used, by synecdoche, to denote all the agents under his control, whether demons or men ; and as the chief instigator and promoter of the persecution of Christians, for he is compared to a roaring lion, prowling about the sheepfold, seeking whom he may devour. *Whom withstand*, oppose as in a hand-to-hand conflict, and let none of the agents of the devil perceive in you any improper fear of death. Be brave soldiers of Christ. (For hints as to the various temptations to which the unconverted are exposed, and the mode of overcoming them, see notes on Jas. 4 : 7. Here Peter is directing, not the impenitent, but persecuted believers.) Mode of maintaining this boldness : *steadfast* (firm, immovable, a metaphor by which doubt and vacillation are forbidden ;) *in faith*. Resist the devil, by never letting go your hold on Christ, or your confidence in His Gospel ; by hallowing the Lord Christ in your hearts, and so conquering the dread of dying. 3 : 14, 15. The motive : *knowing that the same sufferings as to your brotherhood* (dative of reference) *in the world are being accomplished* ; or, *are accomplishing* : inasmuch as ye know that sufferings of the same kind—namely, for well-

doing even unto death in the name of Christ, 3 : 14 to 4 : 19, are, in consequence of God's permission, going on to their destined completion, and that with respect to the whole company of your brethren in the world : which helps to explain Col. 1 : 24. Ye are not alone in this conflict, and as a part of "the sacramental host of God's elect," it becomes you to manifest the boldness and strength which spring from faith in Christ.

John speaks of a victory over the evil one obtained at regeneration, manifested by faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and by walking in holiness. 1 Ep. 2 : 12-14 ; 5 : 18. Peter shows that faith is the sword that conquers Satan in a time of persecution.

In Peter's day Satan had begun to assault the church by persecution and by heresy : the first epistle gives special directions and encouragements in reference to the former, the second, as to the latter. And here the Apostle calls in trumpet tones : Be sober, keep awake ; Satan's army is around you, bent on your bodily destruction, but never surrender, and remember that the battle is going on in all the world, which just now is nothing but a rebel province of God's empire, usurped by Satan, but belonging to Christ.

If we are fighting for Christ and against Satan, then we are in the right army ; and if we die armed with the mind of Christ, our death itself will be a victory. In any great trial, whatever it be, we can successfully resist the devil only by mental sobriety, vigilance, and an immovable faith.

6. B K L S syr in due time, *en kairo*, as c. t. ; A cop vg add of visitation, but inaptly. 8. A B K S Thph omit because ; L syr vg Oec have it. 9. *Epiteleisthai*, the middle infinitive, = are accomplishing : they have already begun, 4 : 17, but are going on till they reach their *telos*, end or consummation. Not, *are accomplished*, for that will occur only at the revelation of Christ's glory ; 4 : 12, 13 ; cf. Rom. 16 : 20 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 3-7. *Ta auta ton pathematon* : a peculiar expression, lit. the same things of the sufferings ; or, the samenesses of the sufferings. In our idiom, the same sufferings, or the same kind of sufferings. *Stereoi te pistei* = steadfast in faith ; since abstract nouns in Greek generally take the article. There is no need here of speaking

of faith as subjectively or objectively considered ; since that faith which withstands Satan must have for its object Christ and His Gospel. If we translate Firm in *the faith*, the sense is, the well-known Christian faith ; which amounts to the same thing.

Your adversary the devil : James, 2 : 19, gives us a leaf from the creed-book of demons ; and Peter declares that Satan is the enemy of Christians, and the chief instigator and promoter of their persecution even unto death. Yet some, pleased with the name of Rationalists and Liberal Christians, hold that these and similar descriptions are merely personifications, denoting moral evil or sin as it works in men. These misnamed interpretations are almost too absurd for refutation. For example : here the principal figure is, not a personification, but a simile, and the law of that figure demolishes this attempt at exegesis : the devil as a roaring lion, etc. In 1 Jno. 3 : 8, it is written : He that doeth sin is of the devil ; for the devil sinneth from the beginning—that is, as these exegetes must say, He that committeth sin is of sin ; for sin sinneth from the beginning ! Can there be perpetual sinful acts without an agent ?

" But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*.
" To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

The Apostle, according to the common text, concludes his epistle with a comprehensive prayer ; a prayer adapted to their state as persecuted disciples, and summing up in a few words the great design of their regeneration, and the blessed results of their complicated trials. But, according to the reading now generally received (will make perfect, etc.), this paragraph is a precious prediction and promise concerning the same things, accompanied with a brief but fervent doxology. Either way, the sense is the same ; for inspired prayers, as well as predictions and promises, are indications of the Divine purpose ; such prayers being in a peculiar manner agreeable to the will of God. We prefer the latter reading.

There is indeed a necessity of sobriety and vigilance, as well as resistance to Satan and his agents on your part ; *But the God of all grace*, from whom proceeds every good and perfect gift, *who called you unto His eternal glory in*

Christ Jesus, who regenerated you (cf. 1 : 15 ; 2 : 9 with 1 : 3) for the obtaining of that glory in consequence of your union with Christ Jesus, *after ye have suffered a little* (cf. 1 : 6) *will Himself make you perfect*, thoroughly repair all deficiencies, restore you to the right use of all your powers and faculties, corporeal and mental (Heb. 13 : 21 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 10, with Mk. 1 : 19) ; *will establish*, make you steadfast, or keep you from falling (the same Greek word in Lk. 22 : 32, "establish thy brethren," to which Peter seems to allude) : *will strengthen*—i.e., with might by His Spirit in the inner man, so as to overcome all temptations ; *will settle*, as a deeply-laid foundation, place you immovably on the Eternal Rock, 2 : 4, etc., or immutably secure your complete salvation in Christ. (So the metaphors are best explained. See Bengel in loc.) *To Him the glory*, etc. Cf. 4 : 11.

Effectual calling is unto or *for eternal glory*. That is the end God has in view in our regeneration, 1 : 3-5 ; 5 : 4. It is *His* eternal glory, since He by His Spirit prepares us for it, 4 : 14, and also because we thus become like God in moral perfections, 2 Ep. 1 : 4 ; so that we, in our measure, are to partake of His glory. Eph. 3 : 19.

He calls to this glory *in Christ* ; in consequence of our federal and legal union with Him, Eph. 1 : 4 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 24 ; 3 : 18 ; and hence God redeemed us by His incarnate Son, and sanctifies us by His indwelling Spirit, 1 : 2, 3 ; Gal. 3 : 13, 14, and intends that we shall partake of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 4 : 13 ; 5 : 1, 4 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 14.

The renewed do not obtain this eternal glory without *sufferings* here ; such sufferings as are described in various places of the epistle. Cf. Acts 14 : 22, Gr. ; Jno. 16 : 33. But these sufferings are momentary and light to those whose eyes are fixed on the eternal weight of glory, soon to be revealed. 4 : 13 ; 5 : 4. Discipline by the way is only a means to attain the end : the struggle is never without faith and hope, and the glory is to all eternity.

Here is a most delightful promise that God Himself will completely prepare the renewed for eternal glory, or make them in all respects meet for their share of it. Cf. Phil. 1 : 6 ; Col. 1 : 12 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 23, 24.

To the God of all grace, then, and to Him alone, is due all the honor for our present well-being and our future salvation, and He alone ought to have eternal dominion over us ; which is gladly admitted on earth and in heaven. Ps. 115 : 1 ; Rev. 5 : 8-14.

We have now in some degree seen how clear is the arrangement, how important are the topics, and how noble are the motives and arguments of this admirable letter. Well indeed did Peter remember Christ's charge to "establish his brethren."

10. K syr vg called us, A B L S called you ; A vg in Christ Jesus, B (with the article) S in Christ : S will make perfect, will establish, will strengthen, will settle ; A B omit the last verb, but have the preceding verbs in the future ; vg perficiet, confirmabit, solidabitque. 11. S vg as c. t., B to him the dominion, etc.

¹² By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. ¹³ The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you ; and so doth Marcus my son. ¹⁴ Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

This is the postscript of the letter. *Silvanus* : the contracted form is *Silas*, as everywhere in the Acts. The order of the Greek is : *By Silvanus, to you the faithful brother, as I am persuaded, I have written briefly*, etc. Some connect thus : By Silvanus . . . I have written briefly unto you ; and they suppose that he was Peter's amanuensis. But if so, it would have been more natural to have stated the fact, or at least to have sent a salutation in his own name. Cf. Rom. 16 : 22. Silas was a leading man among the brethren, and a prophet, Acts 15 : 22, 32, and

one of Paul's co-laborers ; and he, probably, after Paul's last journey to Jerusalem, or after Paul's death, went to assist Peter, and was then with him at Babylon, ready to depart to the five provinces in Asia Minor. *By Silvanus I have written*, is an elliptical mode of expression, = I have written (and sent) by him, as in Acts 15 : 23 ; and so we often speak of having written to another. It designates him as the bearer of the epistle, the brother who had been faithful to them in the past, and was so still, as the Apostle was fully convinced. (Not, *I suppose*. See how the verb is used, Rom. 3 : 28 ; 8 : 18.)

After commending the bearer, he states the nature of the epistle and his main design in writing it : *exhorting and attesting that this* (this epistle which I have written briefly, cf. 2 Ep. 3 : 1) *is the true grace of God, entering into which ye stand* : or, as some copies read, *stand*.

The epistle in its general nature is hortatory, described by the participle *exhorting*—*i.e.*, entreating, warning, and comforting. Cf. 2 Ep. 1 : 12-14 ; 3 : 1. It is an inspired epistle : *attesting*, etc., giving my solemn testimony as an apostle of Christ that this epistle, although brief, is an accurate outline of the true Gospel of God. It teaches salvation by God's grace alone, and agrees therefore with the Gospel preached to you by Paul and his associates, 1 : 12 with 2 Ep. 3 : 15, one of whom I have just commended as a faithful brother. *Grace of God*, by metonymy for the Gospel of His Grace ; the thing signified for the sign of it. See Acts 20 : 24, with 13 : 43 ; Gal. 5 : 4 ; 1 : 6. *Entering into which*, as in 3 : 20. *Entering into which grace*, by substitution, for thoroughly understanding and feeling it, entering into the spirit of the epistle ; or thoroughly imbued with the freeness and richness of God's grace and the obligations it imposes, as before described. *Stand*, by a metaphor, = persevere. To promote this steadfastness, it has been written ; therefore enter into the spirit of it, and persevere. The other reading, *ye stand* (perfect tense, ye have stood and still stand), is a commendation, but it delicately

includes an exhortation, as at I Cor. 15 : 1, to which the Apostle seems to allude.

Salutations follow from the church at Babylon (see the Introduction), from Mark, and from the Apostle. *The co-elect church in Babylon saluteth you.* Peter, writing at the centre of the eastern dispersion, sends the salutations of the disciples there, who, as well as those addressed, were the objects of God's electing love, 1 : 1, 2. *And Mark, my son.* (Eng. Vers., "Marcus" and "Mark," Col. 4 : 10 ; Philémon, ver. 24.) *My son*, an elliptical metaphor ; who is like a son to me, or an affectionate and zealous co-worker in the Gospel. Cf. I Cor. 4 : 17. Paul, when in prison, desired the help of Mark, 2 Tim. 4 : 11, and he probably after Paul's death assisted Peter, with whom he was when this letter was written.

The Apostle's salutations : When ye receive and read this epistle, *salute one another with a kiss of love* ; with an unfeigned token of your brotherly love. The signs of Christian affection vary with the usages of society, but a holy politeness should always be united with brotherly kindness ; which it would not be amiss for crabbed brethren to remember. When we wound the weak, we sin against Christ.

Peace to you all that are in Christ Jesus : perfect blessedness may God impart to you all who truly believe in Messiah the Saviour, who are united to Him by the Spirit and by faith. 2 : 4, 5 ; Gal. 2 : 20 ; Rom. 8 : 9, 10 ; Eph 3 : 17.

12. S has *kai* before this, which seems to be a mistake of a transcriber, but the sense is : Testifying that *even* this epistle, brief as it is, exhibits the true grace of God. A B S stand (imperative), K L vg as c. t. 13. S the church in Babylon, co-elect, saluteth you : Syr vg and other versions also have church, *ecclesia* : which, if not the genuine reading, is the correct interpretation. For if *Syneclecte* (co-elect) were a proper name, the article would have been omitted, as before Silvanus and Mark. The article, then, must refer either to *ecclesia*, or to *diaspora*, 1 : 1, understood. Eusebius, citing this verse, omits *ecclesia*, as c. t. ; so also Origen : E. H. 2 : 15 ; 6 : 25. 14. S has the whole verse as c. t., A B omit Jesus.

In ver. 12, *I have written* is the epistolary aorist, cf. Gal. 6 : 11, by which a writer transports himself to the time of the readers. The reference is to *this* epistle, as Peter expressly declares ; not to an imaginary lost one, as Grotius and Hug assume.

By sending Silvanus with the Epistle, Peter not only signified his agreement with Paul as to " the Gospel of the grace of God," but also gave them an unexceptionable proof of the genuineness of the letter.

THE
SECOND EPISTLE
OF
PETER.

INTRODUCTION.

Two important questions must be especially examined ; the first relating to the authorship of the epistle, and the second, to the place and time of its composition, the preaching and martyrdom of the Apostle.

I. *The Genuineness of the Epistle.*

Was this epistle written by the Apostle Peter ? The writer asserts it in a way that cannot be misunderstood. 1 : 1 ; 1 : 16-18 ; 3 : 1. We must therefore either receive it as Peter's, or reject it as a forgery.

We hold it to be genuine for the following reasons : 1. It is found, with the rest of the Catholic Epistles, in the most ancient manuscripts and versions of the New Testament that are extant ; the old Syriac version alone excepted. And this fact is of the greatest importance. The Sinaitic manuscript, for example, was written in the beginning of the fourth century ; the Alexandrine and Vatican, during the fifth century ; and, of course, from manuscripts previously existing. The Coptic and Sahidic versions were made in the third century (the Sahidic some hold to be of the second century), and are more ancient than any known manuscript, representing the text in close approximation to the apostolic age.

Jerome's version was made towards the close of the fourth century, and it is the basis of the Latin Vulgate. There were also Latin translations before the time of Jerome ; some reaching to the second century.

In this manner this epistle, with the rest of the Catholic Epistles, is traced from the fourth century up to the age of the apostles.

2. Because, notwithstanding the doubts of some in the time of Origen and Eusebius, this epistle, with the rest of the Catholic Epistles, was received as genuine by the churches generally towards the conclusion of the fourth century, who unquestionably had better opportunities of judging concerning the historical evidence in the matter than we have.

3. Because it was extant in the third century, and in the second, and allusions to it can be traced up even to the age of the apostles.

4. Because the internal evidence is in all respects most decidedly in its favor.

5. Because the inspiration of the writer has been and is abundantly proved by the fulfilment of predictions contained in the epistle. False teachers promulgating deadly opinions, forming sects or schools, have arisen and still exist, as predicted. Gnostics, for example, Arians, Humanitarians (Socinians and Unitarians so-called), Universalists, and Papists, have all variously but really denied the Lord that professedly bought them; and many now in Protestant churches can hardly speak or write of Christ's personal coming and reign except it be with sneering and contempt; while some are Rationalists, rejecting the Scriptures as inspired, and making their own reason and desires their bible.

6. Because Jude, an inspired writer of the Apostolic Church, towards the close of the first century, recognizes this epistle as a genuine apostolic writing, vs. 17, 18.

Historical Evidence of its Genuineness. That the Canon of the N. T. received by the churches, Greek and Latin, in the fourth century was the same as that of the Protestant churches now, is generally admitted, and cannot be intelligently denied. The proof of it is overwhelming; derived not only from catalogues of the N. T., but also from abun-

dant quotations in many writers. As to the Catholic Epistles in particular, we may refer to Augustine of Hippo Regius in Africa, Epiphanius of Salamis in Cyprus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory Nazianzen, Cyril and Didymus of Alexandria, who wrote commentaries on these epistles, Jerome, Rufinus, and Athanasius, to mention no others.

This epistle was extant in the third century, and received as a part of the New Testament ; which is proved, as aforesaid, from the fact that it is found in the Sinaitic manuscript, Jerome's Latin version, and those preceding it, and from quotations of or allusions to it by authors of this age.

Origen : born at Alexandria, A.D. 185, died at Tyre, 253 or 254, President of the Catechetical School at Alexandria, 203.

Eusebius, E. H. 6, 25, quotes from Origen thus : " Peter has left one epistle universally received. Let there be also a second, although it is doubted of." The Greek is : *esto de kai deuteran amphiballetai gar*. We cite this testimony of Origen, to show (1.) That this second epistle was well known in his time. (2.) That it had come down from earlier times, and that it was then, as now, ascribed to Peter, and to him alone. (3.) That this learned critic of the Ante-Nicene church did not see any good reason to reject it as a spurious writing ; but on the contrary was ready and willing to receive it as genuine : Let the second epistle be also received as Peter's. What is there in the epistle to lead any to reject it ? Still, it is with some a disputed question. This is the pith and point of Origen's testimony in the matter ; and it is certainly in favor of the epistle. For Eusebius, an ardent admirer of Origen, would not cite any interpolated or spurious work of that writer : nay, he professedly cites from Origen's exegetical works or commentaries on John. (4.) That Origen here mentions the doubts of others, not his own ; and he nowhere rejects it as spurious. (5.) That all who then, and before his day, received it as Peter's, must have considered it as an integral part of the New Testament.

Methodius, about A.D. 290. According to Jerome, and Socrates, E. H. 6, 13, he was for a time bishop of Olympus in Lycia, Asia Minor: died as a martyr, 311. He is not noticed by Eusebius, probably because Methodius was an opponent of Origen.

“For the whole world,” says Methodius (we have nothing at present to do with the accuracy or inaccuracy of any interpretation of ancient writers), “deluged with fire, shall be burned for its purification and renewal.” Apud Euphanium. Haer. 64, 31. Here is no direct citation, but an unquestionable allusion to 2 Pet. 3 : 6, 7, 10, 13. The phrase “deluged with water,” *hudati kataklustheis*, in 2 Pet. 3 : 6, seems to have suggested “deluged with fire,” *kata kluzomenos puri*, used by Methodius. And when he says that the burning is for *the renewal* of our world, the allusion to 3 : 13 is undeniable.

Hippolytus, a disciple of Irenæus. His public life falls in the end of the second century and the beginning of the third : A.D. 198 to 236. (See Schaff's History of the Christian Church, and Bunsen's Hippolytus.) He was bishop or presbyter at Portus, the harbor of Rome.

In his Refutation of Heresies, 10, 30, he speaks of “angels chained in Tartarus as punishment for their sins ;” which is a manifest allusion to 2 Pet. 2 : 4, where only in the N. T. their place of punishment is so designated : c. t. *seirais zophou tartarosas* ; and so Hippolytus seems to have read it from manuscripts then extant. In 9, 2, speaking of Zephyrinus and Callistus, then bishops of Rome, he says : “And they, abashed and constrained by the truth, have confessed for a short period, but after a little wallow once again in the same mire.” Cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 22.

In his treatise on Christ and Ante-Christ, § 2, he speaks of the prophets as “furnished with the Spirit, and largely honored by the Word Himself ;” “and when moved by Him the prophets announced what God willed. For they spake not of their own power ; neither did they declare what pleased themselves. But they were endowed with wisdom

by the Word," etc. ; here are allusions to 2 Pet. 1 : 20, 21, and 3 : 15. Peter also, in his first epistle speaks of " the Spirit of Christ in the prophets."

Again, in his Homily on the Consummation, on Anti-christ, and on the Second Coming of our Lord, § 10—which we hold in the main to be genuine, inasmuch as the course of thought and the citations and explanations of Scripture agree with the Treatise just named—he says : " And the apostles, in establishing the truth of the advent (Gr., parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ have each of them indicated the appearing of these abominable and ruin-working men, and have openly announced their lawless deeds. First of all, Peter . . . has instructed us to this effect : ' Know this first, children, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts. And there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies.' " Cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 3 ; 2 : 1. (Cited by Hippolytus as in c. t.)

Firmilian of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, about A.D. 265.

In his letter to Cyprian of Carthage he thus speaks : " And, moreover, abusing the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, as if they had taught this doctrine ; they who in their epistles have cursed heretics, and admonished us to avoid them." Here we have an accurate description of one great design of Peter's second epistle, which Firmilian recognizes as genuine ; for Peter has not told us of the doom of false teachers in his first epistle, but only in the second, 2 : 1-17. And since Firmilian lived in Cappadocia, he must have had opportunities to trace the testimony of writers and churches in that and the other provinces as to Peter's epistles up to the age of the apostles. His testimony, then, is of very great value.

This epistle was extant in the second century, and received as a part of the N. T. ; as is evident from the fact that it is

contained in the Coptic and Sahidic versions, and in the Latin translations made before Jerome's. The same thing appears from allusions to it by authors of this age.

Clement, President of the Catechetical School of Alexandria, about A.D. 189. According to the testimony of Eusebius and Photius (the passages are cited in our Introduction to James), Clement gave abridged accounts, or wrote brief notes, on the Catholic Epistles, with which 2 Pet. was always classed. And since Clement received the Epistle of Jude as inspired, it is perfectly natural to conclude that he would so esteem this second epistle. And the nature of his work shows their then general reception by the churches as inspired productions.

Theophilus of Antioch in Syria : died A.D. 181. In his apologetic work, addressed to Autolycus, 2, 9, he says : " But men of God borne along in spirit by the Holy Spirit, and (so) becoming prophets, being inspired and made wise by God Himself, became God-taught, holy, and righteous." This is an informal quotation, with a brief explication, of 2 Pet. 1 : 21, " God's holy men spake, borne along by the Holy Spirit." Theophilus has *pneumatophoroi pneumatos hagiou*, and Peter *hupo pneumatos hagiou pheromenoi* ; the last word Peter alone uses to describe the action of the Spirit on the minds of the prophets. Who can believe that such allusions are accidental ? Again, 3, 12. " Moreover, concerning the righteousness which the law enjoined, confirmatory utterances are found both with the prophets and in the gospels, because *they all have spoken borne along in spirit* (or, spirit-moved, *pneumatophoroi*) *by one Spirit of God*."

Theophilus, 2, 13, speaking of the creation of the light : " The command, then, of God—that is, *His Word, shining as a lamp in an enclosed room* (or prison, Acts 12 : 7, Gr.), *en oikemati sunochomeno*, lit up all that was under heaven ;" which looks like a reminiscence of the comparison, 2 Pet. 1 : 19.

And it is well known that *Ephrem the Syrian*, of the fourth century, in his Greek works, freely quotes this epistle as Peter's ; which he would not have done, if it had been previously unknown to or rejected by the Syrian churches.

Justin Martyr, about A.D. 140. Dialogue with Trypho. c. 81. " We also understand *the expression* (or, *that which has been spoken*, as in Acts 2 : 16 ; Rom. 4 : 18, *to eiremenon*), ' the day of the Lord is as a thousand years ' conducts to this ;" leads to the same conclusion, or contributes to prove this millennium. Cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 8, 10. In this context Justin cites Isa. 65 : 17-25, refers to the Revelation as written by the Apostle John, and to Lk. 20 : 35, 36, and also to the scriptural expression just mentioned ; all, to prove what he thinks to be the true doctrine concerning the millennium. In Ps. 90 : 4, it is, " A thousand years in thy sight are as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night ;" the similies being wholly different. Justin, in our judgment, certainly alludes to 2 Pet. 3 : 8, 10, and as a part of Scripture, or scriptural form of speech, just as valid for proof as the words found in Isaiah, Luke, or the Apocalypse.

Irenæus of Lyons, about A.D. 188, quotes the same expression, and for the same purpose as Justin : 5, 28, 3. And so does *Barnabas* in his epistle, § 15. After citing Gen. 2 : 2 he says : " This implies that the Lord will finish all things in six thousand years, ' for a day is with him a thousand years.' And He Himself testifies, saying, Behold, the day of the Lord shall be as a thousand years :" so reads the Sinaitic manuscript. Cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 8, 10.

Polycarp of Smyrna in Asia Minor. In his letter to the church at Philippi, § 3, " I did not take it upon myself to write these things to you concerning righteousness, but ye have urged me thereto. For neither I, nor any like me, can come up to the wisdom of the blessed and renowned Paul, who, when he was among you, in the presence of the men then living, taught accurately and steadfastly the word of truth, and who when absent wrote you an epistle : " Gr., *epistolas*. Now, what does Polycarp mean by *Paul's wis-*

dom as exhibited in his preaching and epistles? The meaning is transparent, and so is the allusion to 2 Pet. 3 : 15. I and others like me are not inspired, and hence we cannot attain to the wisdom given to Paul.

Again, § 5, "Let the young men also be blameless in all things, being especially careful to preserve chastity, and restraining themselves as with a bridle from all evil. For it is well to be driven back (Gr., *anakoptesthai*) from 'the lusts that are in the world,' because 'every lust warreth against the spirit;' and 'neither fornicators, etc., shall inherit the kingdom of God.' " Here we have a specimen of Polycarp's usual mode of citation; *for, because, and,* introducing the texts. And if the clause, 'every lust wars against the spirit,' be, as is generally admitted, a memoriter allusion to or quotation of 1 Pet. 2 : 11, then it is equally evident that the phrase, 'the lusts that are in the world,' is the same kind of allusion to or citation of 2 Pet. 1 : 4.

This Epistle was extant in the first century, and received as a part of the N. T., which is proved from allusions to it by Clement of Rome, and by Jude, the brother of James. (The testimony of Jude will be noticed below.)

Clement wrote an epistle in the name of the Church of Rome to the church at Corinth, about A.D. 70, or A.D. 97. It is not agreed whether it was written soon after the persecution in the reign of Nero, or in that of Domitian; and it matters not, so far as our present argument is concerned.

§ 7. "Noah preached repentance, and they who listened" (Clement refers probably to his family who believed the prediction concerning the flood) "were saved." 2 Pet. 2 : 5. "He saved Noah, one of eight, a preacher of righteousness." And the *preaching* of Noah is expressly mentioned in the N. T. only in 2 Pet. 2 : 5. In § 9, "Noah preached regeneration to the world."

In § 8, after quoting Ezek. 33 : 11, and Isa. 1 : 16-20, Clement continues, "*Willing, then, that all His beloved*

should partake of repentance, by His almighty will He established it"—*i.e.*, the great truth of God's mercy to those who repent. 2 Pet. 3 : 8, 9. "*Beloved*, the Lord is long-suffering to us, *not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*" (Clement, according to his usual manner when citing from the N. T., alludes more to the thought than to the exact words.)

§ 23. "Far from us be *the Scripture*, where it says, Miserable are the double-minded, the doubtful in soul, who say, These things have we heard even in the times of our fathers, and, behold, we have grown old, and none of them has happened to us." These words are not taken by Clement from an apocryphal writing, as some suppose, but they are a commingling, or loose quotation, of Jas. 1 : 8, and 2. Pet. 3 : 3, 4. For they are designated as a part of Scripture, not as an ecclesiastical writing, and the warning is enforced, as in this second epistle, by reminding them of the coming of Christ. "Of a truth," continues Clement, "speedily and suddenly shall His will be accomplished, as *the Scripture* bears witness, 'Speedily will he come, and will not tarry.'"

Objections to the Historical Evidence Refuted.

Eusebius of Cæsarea in Palestine published his Ecclesiastical History about A.D. 312. In Book 3, Chaps. 3 and 25, he makes the following classification of the books of the New Testament. (1.) Those universally received as genuine—*viz.*, the four Gospels, Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul (although Eusebius himself held the Epistle to the Hebrews to be genuine), 1 Jno. and 1 Pet. (2.) The controverted—*i.e.*, those whose genuineness was disputed by some, although well known and approved by most as genuine—*viz.*, Heb., Jas., 2 Pet., Jude, 2 and 3 Jno., Rev. (3.) Those universally rejected as spurious; such as "the Acts of Peter," "the Gospel according to Peter," etc.

Obj. 1. Eusebius put this epistle among the controverted books of the New Testament.

Ans. What of that? Luther called the eloquent and holy Epistle of James “an epistle of straw” (especially as compared with the Pauline Epistles), and spoke foolishly of the Revelation. Why? Owing to doctrinal prejudice or preconceived opinions. Now what happened through natural causes in the sixteenth century can be no miracle in the fourth.

That *too great importance has been given to Eusebius’ classification of the books of the N. T.*, is evident from the fact that it was disregarded by Augustine, Athanasius, Jerome, Rufinus, and others, and no doubt because they found after careful examination that the so-called controverted books were unquestionably genuine. The same thing is evident also from the fact that Eusebius put the Revelation among the controverted books. But the genuineness of that prophecy is confirmed by the most ancient and ample testimony. It is alluded to, for example, in the letter concerning the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne; expressly ascribed to John the Apostle of Christ by Justin Martyr; received by Melito of Sardis, who wrote a work on it; by Irenæus, Hippolytus, Theophilus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Cyprian. Also, by Origen, who expressly ascribes it to John the Apostle, and by Victorinus of Pettaw in Germany, who wrote a commentary on it. Most of these facts are stated by Eusebius himself; and yet, forsooth, the Revelation must be a controverted book, because it contradicted his preconceived opinions concerning the millennium!

Eusebius, indeed, did not consider the second epistle to be genuine; yet he acknowledges that “it was studiously read with the other Scriptures.” And he thus distinguishes it from apocryphal books, 3, 3.

“As to that work, however, which is ascribed to him, called the Acts, and the Gospel according to Peter, and that called the Preaching and Revelation of Peter, *we know nothing of their being handed down as genuine*, since neither among the ancient nor the church writers of our own day has there been one who has appealed to testimony taken

from them." So sharp and pointed is the distinction made by this unwilling witness between works falsely ascribed to Peter and this Second Epistle.

Obj. 2. It is not found in the ancient Syriac version.

Ans. That version was made either in the latter part of the first century, or in the second: and of the Catholic Epistles it contains Jas., 1 Pet., and 1 Jno. It is likely, then, that the Syriac Translator had no knowledge of this epistle at the time he wrote. And it is evident from the epistle itself, 3:16, that it was written *after* the Pauline Epistles were well known and published, or towards the close of the first century.

Obj. 3. It is not quoted by Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and others.

Ans. The mere fact of non-citation is no proof that they rejected it. What canon of criticism have we, or what rule suggested by good sense, which makes it binding on any church writer, ancient or modern, to quote from or allude to *all* the books of the N. T., even in those compositions the aim of which is not to give catalogues of these Sacred Books?

As to 2 Pet., however, we should recollect that Firmilian, when writing to Cyprian, unmistakably alludes to it. But who can believe that he would strive to confirm and cheer Cyprian, by appealing to an epistle which Cyprian rejected as spurious?

As another illustration of the weakness of this objection, we add that Irenæus quotes 1 and 2 Jno. (1, 16, 3. 3, 16, paragraphs 5 and 8), but not 3 Jno. How, then, does the mere fact of the non-citation of the latter epistle prove that he rejected, or was ignorant of it? Besides, he refers to writers of the N. T. not expressly quoted by him: 3, 21, 3, "For Peter, and John, and Matthew, and Paul, *and the rest* successively (et reliqui deinceps), as well as their followers, have quoted the words of the prophets according to the

translation of the elders"—*i.e.*, Sept. Who can prove that by *the rest*, there is no allusion to Jas., 2 Pet., and Jude? (*Their followers—i.e.*, Mark and Luke.) Let us now recapitulate the historical evidence. We have sufficient proof of the genuineness of this epistle ; for (1.) It is found in all the oldest manuscripts, and most of the ancient versions. (2.) In the fourth century it was everywhere and unhesitatingly quoted as Peter's. (3.) In the third century it was well known at Alexandria, ascribed to Peter, and probably received as genuine by Origen. It is pointedly alluded to by Methodius of Olympus in Lycia ; alluded to, expressly quoted, and ascribed to Peter by Hippolytus ; and unmistakably described as Peter's by Firmilian of Cæsarea in Cappadocia. (4.) In the second century Clement of Alexandria wrote brief notes on the Catholic Epistles, with which 2 Pet. was always classed. And it is alluded to by Theophilus of Antioch in Syria, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Barnabas, and Polycarp. (5.) Allusions are also made to it by Clement of Rome, probably the same Clement so highly commended by Paul, Phil. 4 : 3.

Permit us to add that the evidence is not only sufficient, but all that could reasonably be expected in the circumstances of the case. For (1.) many writings of the Ante-Nicene Church are lost—*e.g.*, Papias' Explication of the Words of the Lord ; numerous Epistles of Polycarp ; Epistles of Dionysius of Corinth, some of which were addressed to the churches in Pontus and Nicomedia in Bithynia ; Theophilus of Antioch against Hermogones ; and many of Origen's works are found only in interpolated Latin translations. (2.) The extant writings of the Apostolic Fathers are few and brief, and their design is not to give catalogues of the New Testament, but to incite to love and holy living. (3.) The Apologists who defended Christianity against Polytheism quoted mainly, as was natural, from the Old Testament. (4.) All the Catholic Epistles, that of James perhaps excepted, were written towards the close of the first century ; and some time must have elapsed before they

could be circulated among the churches, and more before they would be referred to by Christian authors. (5.) Besides, the death of Peter might have occurred soon after finishing his second epistle, and without an opportunity on his part to send it by a bearer to the churches ; which seems to be intimated by the fact that it has no postscript, like the first epistle. And if Peter was crucified by Jewish fanatics at Babylon, or near it, a considerable period must have passed by before the church there could have sent it, duly authenticated, and by a safe messenger, to the churches in the five provinces of Asia Minor.

Internal Evidence. The writer's single-heartedness, his love of truth and holiness, flame forth and flash in every part of the letter. Not a single mark of a deceiver's pen is anywhere visible. The whole epistle is in all respects suitable to the great Apostle of the circumcision. It is needless to prove what is generally admitted by the most sagacious of those who wholly or in a modified way object to its genuineness, owing to a supposed unlikeness of style when compared with the former epistle. "Certainly," says Calvin, "the majesty of Christ's Spirit appears in every part of the epistle." Indeed, it does ; and particularly in the part so often assailed, the second chapter, which predicts the rise and continuance of false teachers down to Christ's advent ; a prediction which has been in process of fulfilment from the rise of Gnosticism, Arianism and Papism unto this day.

Principal Objection. The style of the second epistle differs greatly from the first and especially in the second chapter.

Ans. (1.) This must be convincingly proved, not assumed. (2.) To judge concerning the author of a work from the mere style, is in many cases a very precarious ground of judging, and particularly so when that work comprises but a few pages. (3.) Different subjects, or different modes of handling a subject, feelings excited or composed, make a great difference in the style of one and the same author. And how was it possible for Peter to suppress holy indignation, when, borne alone by the Spirit, he portrayed

the characteristics and doom of false and abominable teachers? (4.) In our judgment, the style of this second epistle is such as to indicate clearly that both epistles had the same author. We give suggestions on this point in a tabular form.

*Undesigned Coincidences in Thought and Expression between
the Two Epistles.**

SECOND EPISTLE.

1 : 1. Like precious faith.

No other N. T. writer characterizes faith as *precious*.

1 : 3. Who called us by his own
glory and *energy*.

1 : 5. Add to your faith *energy*.

1 : 4. Partakers of a divine nature.

1 : 9. Old sins.

1 : 14. The *putting away* of my tent.

1 : 16. Eyewitnesses, *epoptai*.

2 : 2. Many *shall follow* out their lasciviousnesses. Cf. 2 : 15 and 1 : 16.

2 : 5. Noah one of eight.

2 : 7. Walk (*anastrophé*) in lasciviousness. Cf. 3 : 11 ; 2 : 18, Gr.

2 : 9. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the pious out of trials.

2 : 10. Despise government.

2 : 14. Cease not from sin.

2 : 17. For whom the blackness, etc., is kept. 3 : 7. Kept for fire.

2 : 18. Lusts of the flesh, lasciviousnesses.

2 : 19. Freedom to them promising, while they themselves are slaves of corruption.

3 : 1. This second epistle. Your pure mind : *dianoia*.

3 : 18. Grow in grace, etc.

FIRST EPISTLE.

1 : 7. Faith much more precious.

2 : 9. That ye should show forth the *energies* of him who called you : Gr., *arete*.

1 : 14. As he who called you is holy, be ye also holy.

1 : 14. Former lusts.

3 : 21. The *putting away* of the filth.

2 : 12, and 3 : 2, cognate participle.

2 : 21. Ye *should follow upon* (close upon) his footprints.

3 : 20. Eight souls.

4 : 3. Walking in lasciviousnesses : synonymous part. as in 2 Pet. 2 : 10.

1 : 6, 7 ; 5 : 9, 10.

2 : 13, etc.

4 : 1. Hath ceased from sin.

1 : 4. Kept in heaven for you.

4 : 3. Lasciviousnesses, lusts.

2 : 11. Fleshly lusts.

2 : 16. Not having the freedom as a cloak of wickedness.

5 : 12. This (epistle) is, etc.

1 : 13. Same word.

2 : 2. That ye may grow thereby.

* By *undesigned* coincidences we mean those which are natural to an author, agreeable to his cast of mind, spontaneous, and unpremeditated.

*Undesigned Coincidences in Thought and Expression between
the Epistles and Peter's Discourses Recorded in the Acts.*

ACTS.	SECOND EPISTLE.	FIRST EPISTLE.
I : 17. <i>He obtained (eluche) the lot of this ministry—i.e., received it gratuitously, ver. 25.</i>	I : 1. <i>To them that have obtained (lachoust) like precious faith with us.</i>	
II : 17. <i>God gave them the like (isen) gift, as also to us.</i>	I : 1. <i>Like precious faith (isotimon) with us.</i>	
I : 18. <i>The wages of unrighteousness.</i>	2 : 13, 15. <i>The same.</i>	
I : 21. <i>The Lord Jesus = Jehovah Jesus.</i>	I : 1, 2, 8, 11, 14, 16 ; 2 : 9, 20 ; 3 : 18. <i>The objection, then, derived from the frequent use of Lord and Saviour in the 2d epistle, is perfectly worthless.</i>	2 : 2, 3. <i>That the Lord (Jehovah) is gracious ; to whom approaching.</i>
I : 24. <i>Thou, Lord, heart-knower of all.</i>		3 : 15. <i>Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts.</i>
10 : 36. <i>He is Lord of all.</i>		
2 : 36. <i>Both Lord and Christ, the very same Jesus : in these two texts LORD is = Adonai.</i>		
5 : 31. <i>Prince and Saviour.</i>		
4 : 12. <i>Neither is there salvation in any other, etc.</i>		
Peter is fond of using <i>huparcho</i> , to subsist, in the sense of <i>einai</i> , to be.		
2 : 30. <i>Therefore subsisting as prophet = being a prophet.</i>	2 : 19. <i>They subsisting as slaves of corruption.</i>	
3 : 6. <i>Silver and gold subsist not to me.</i>	I : 8. <i>These things subsisting to you. Cf.</i>	
5 : 4. <i>And when sold, did it not subsist in thine own right ?</i>	3 : 11.	
2 : 33. <i>Having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he (Jesus) hath shed forth this, etc.</i>	I : 3. <i>His divine power (that of Jesus our Lord) hath given us all the things (all the charismata) pertaining to life and godliness.</i>	

ACTS.	SECOND EPISTLE.	FIRST EPISTLE
3 : 12. As if <i>by our own (idia)</i> power or godliness we had made, etc.	1 : 3. Who called us <i>by his own (idia)</i> glory and energy.	
	1 : 20. No prophecy of Scripture begins to be <i>of</i> (the prophet's) <i>own</i> explication.	
3 : 13. The God of Abraham, etc., glorified his Servant Jesus.	1 : 17. Received from God the Father honor and glory.	1 : 21. God who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory.
4 : 11. The* Stone set at naught by you the builders, etc.		2 : 7. The Stone which the builders reject- ed, etc.
8 : 20. Let thy silver be with thee (going) into perdition.	2 : 3. In covetousness etc. Their perdition slumbereth not.	
10 : 28. How <i>lawless</i> , or unlawful, it is, etc., <i>athemitos</i> .	2 : 7 ; 3 : 17. The <i>lawless : athesmos</i> = <i>athemitos</i> . <i>Anomos</i> , 2 : 8 ; Acts 2 : 23.	4 : 3. <i>Lawless</i> idolatries : <i>athemitos</i> .
10 : 42. He is the one appointed by God judge of the living and the dead.	2 : 9. The Lord knoweth how to deliver, etc., and to keep the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.	4 : 5. Ready to judge the living and the dead.
10 : 4. Can any one forbid, or <i>hinder</i> ? <i>koluo</i> , cut off—prevent, restrain, or hinder.	2 : 16. <i>Hindered</i> the prophet's madness.	
11 : 17. Could I <i>hinder</i> God?		

The more carefully the above and similar coincidences are examined, the stronger the evidence in favor of the second epistle will appear. They are such as "no forger would have thought of, even if Satan himself had been at his elbow."

An argument for the genuineness of this epistle may be derived from the constitution of the Apostle's mind. He, being fervent in spirit, and fluent in speech, would not hesitate, when the occasion or subject required it, about using perspicuous compound words and rare but highly significant expressions. As specimens we refer to *allotriæpiskopos*, 1 Pet. 4 : 15 ; bishop of souls, 2 : 25 ; *Euergesia*, Acts 4 : 9 ; cognate verb, 10 : 38 ; *agathopoia*, 1 Ep. 4 : 19 ; wine-over-

flowings, 1 Ep. 4 : 3 ; leaving below a copy, 1 Ep. 2 : 21 ; *zophon tartaros*, 2 Ep. 2 : 4 ; greatly-becoming glory, 1 : 17 ; *huperogka*, 2 : 18 ; *megaleiotes*, 1 : 16.

Prolonged, accumulated on-rushing sentences are perfectly natural in the outpouring of strong emotions ; as in 1 Ep. 1 : 3-12 ; 2 Ep. 2d chapter ; Acts 3 : 13-16.

The make of Peter's mind is also exhibited by the similarity of the rhetorical, or oratorical, structure of the sentences, as found in this epistle (especially in the second chapter), and in his discourses recorded in the Acts. Take one specimen out of many.

Acts 2 : 36. Assuredly, then, let all the house of Israel know that both Lord and Christ God hath appointed him, the very same Jesus whom ye crucified.

2 Pet. 2 : 7. And righteous Lot, worn out by the walk of the lawless in lasciviousness, he snatched away.

We see, then, that the objection derived from the alleged difference of style, to which such undue importance has been attached in ancient and modern times, amounts to nothing. Instead of a disparity, grammatical and rhetorical, there is the most striking and unmistakable analogy.

Testimony of Jude. Jude, an inspired writer of the Apostolic Church (see Introduction to that epistle), recognizes this epistle as written by an apostle. " But, beloved, be mindful of the words spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ ; for they told you, ' There shall be scoffers in the last time, walking,' etc." Now *empaiktai*, = scoffers or mockers, is a very rare word, only once used in the Sept. Isa. 3 : 4, and in 2 Pet. 3 : 3, whence Jude takes it. Jude not only alludes to, but quotes 2 Pet. 3 : 2, 3, and as the words of one of Christ's apostles.

From a review of the whole testimony, external and internal, we may justly conclude that no book has, or can have, a more unquestionable right to its place in the Canon of the New Testament.

II. *Date of the Epistle. Peter's Preaching and Martyrdom.*

Many hold that Peter was crucified at Rome in the reign of Nero. But even if that be granted, it does not follow that he wrote his epistles in the city. But it cannot be granted; for *after* that persecution Peter was alive and wrote his first epistle, and from Babylon. See notes on 1 Ep. 4 : 12-19, and the Introduction.

If we give heed to the New Testament, there is an antecedent improbability as to Peter's martyrdom at Rome; for there was an agreement between Paul and Peter as to preaching the Gospel; Paul going to the Gentiles, and Peter to the Jews. Gal. 2 : 7-9. And 1 Pet. 5 : 13 shows that Peter adhered to that agreement. Besides, in all the Epistles of Paul written from Rome, Peter is never mentioned; not even in the second to Timothy.

When Peter wrote his first epistle, he was in Babylon, the centre of the Eastern Dispersion, and the second was written not long after the first, 3 : 1; when he knew that his death was swiftly approaching, 1 : 13, 14; and after the Pauline Epistles were well known and published, 3 : 15; which must have been a considerable time subsequent to the death of Paul. Peter's own epistles, then, show that he did not die with Paul at Rome in the Neronian persecution. And this is all that is certain concerning the date of both epistles.

But ancient writers so testify. We answer the best of men may be mistaken, or be deceived by seemingly pious but really ambitious hypocrites: and witnesses must not be counted, but their testimony should be carefully weighed.

We answer again that *Clement of Rome*, the earliest and most competent witness, who had the best opportunities of judging in the matter, testifies that Peter confined his apostolic labors to the East. His testimony, § 5, follows :

“ But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent athletes. Let us take the noble examples of our own generation. On account of zeal and envy, the

greatest and most righteous pillars (Gal. 2 : 9) were persecuted even unto death. Let us set before our eyes the excellent apostles. Peter, on account of unrighteous zeal endured not one or two, but many hardships ; and so having given his testimony (or being martyred, *houtō marturēsas*), he departed to the befitting place of glory. On account of zeal" the malignant zeal before mentioned, " Paul also received the prize of steadfast endurance ; having borne chains seven times, banished and stoned. After he had been a preacher both in the East and in the West, he obtained the noble renown of his faith" (an illustrious reputation as a believer), " having taught the whole world righteousness, and having come to the limit of the West, and given his testimony before the governors : " *ka[i epi] to terma tēs duseos elthōn, kai marturēsas epi ton hēgoumenon*. " Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, after he had become an exceeding great example of steadfast endurance."

Clement, as it appears in some degree even from this extract (literally translated), is a writer florid and prolix, delighting in hyperboles, but of unquestionable honesty.

Now, what is absolutely certain in his testimony? *That Paul preached both in the East and in the West ; which implies that Peter, before named, confined his apostolic labors to the East.* And this corresponds with what is written, 1 Pet. 5 : 13.

Clement *does not say* that *Peter came to the limit*, or boundary, *of the West* (whether that expression designates Rome, Spain, or England, and each of these hypotheses has its supporters) ; neither does he testify, as subsequent writers have done, that Peter and Paul preached together at Rome, laid the foundations of the church in that city, or that Peter was there as bishop for twenty or twenty-five years. He mentions neither the place nor time of Peter's martyrdom, but simply testifies that Peter's death was the consequence of the zeal of fanatical opponents.

Paul only preached both in the East and in the West, and

Peter, after a patient and persevering discharge of his duties as an apostle, because of malignant zeal, died as a martyr. This is the whole of Clement's testimony concerning Peter. The rest are imaginary or manufactured facts, of which Clement of Rome, who certainly wrote about A.D. 97, and who had the best opportunities of knowing, is wholly silent.

But what must be thought of the testimonies of subsequent authors? Let us hear what they say, and judge for ourselves.

Dionysius of Corinth, about A.D. 170. In his Discourse to the Romans, found in Eusebius, E. H. 2, 25, he speaks thus: "Peter and Paul planted us in our Corinth, and likewise taught us. They likewise taught together in Italy, and suffered martyrdom at the same time." But what is such testimony worth, mixed as it is with an imaginary simultaneous planting and teaching by both apostles in Corinth and at Rome, of which the N. T. says nothing? Besides, a desire of vain glory leaks out, sufficient to account for what Dionysius says, and enough to throw a just ground of suspicion over the whole story, as it is by him narrated: If Peter and Paul preached and died, as you Romans say, in Italy; we on our part affirm that they both planted and taught us in Corinth. Your position as a church is but little, if any superior to ours.

A similar pride, connected with a desire to exalt the bishops of Rome, is manifest in what *Caius of Rome* (about A.D. 212) says to Proclus concerning the tombs of Peter and John: "I can show you the trophies of the Apostles. For if you will go to the Vatican or the Ostian way, you will find the trophies of those who laid the foundations of this church." To which Proclus might have replied: So-called, no doubt; but where is the proof that their bodies are there deposited? Besides, a flourishing and celebrated church existed at Rome before Paul arrived in the city. Rom. 1:8. Neither he, then, nor Peter laid the foundations of that church. If Caius blunders so (or uses a fiction as a

fact) in one statement, what proof have we of his accuracy in the other?

Irenæus of Lyons, about A.D. 188. (3, 3, 2.) He repeats the current story about the preaching and founding of the Church of Rome by Peter and Paul; probably, without investigating its truth or falsehood, and then continues: "*For it is a matter of necessity that every church should agree with this church on account of its pre-eminent (or greater) authority—that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the apostolic tradition has been preserved continuously by those who exist everywhere.*" So Roberts renders the passage, though speaking doubtfully of its meaning. See Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*, § 110. Thus in the Latin translation: *Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potio-rem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam.*

We hold that the words just cited and printed in italics were interpolated; and for the following reasons: 1. It is not at all likely that Irenæus, who so sharply rebuked Victor of Rome as to the time and manner of celebrating Easter, considered the bishops of Rome as popes, or held that church as infallible. (Eus. E. H. 5, 24.)

2. That these words were interpolated, is evident from the preceding context: 3, 2, 2. "But when we refer them to *that tradition* (oral teaching) *which originates from the apostles, and which is preserved by means of the successions of presbyters in the churches*, they object," etc. Again, 3, 3, 1, "*It is in the power of all in every church who may wish to see the truth, to contemplate clearly the tradition of the apostles manifested throughout the whole world.*" But "since," he says, 3, 3, 2, "to reckon up the successions of all the churches would be tedious," he selects the famous Church of Rome as an example; one out of many in the world. The same thing appears from the immediately subsequent context. For if faithful men, bishops, presbyters, and people, everywhere had and kept the truths originally taught by the apostles, there could be no necessity of at-

tributing the principality to the Church of Rome, or ask that church in preference to all others for an authoritative decision in any disputed question.

3. Our supposition, just shown to be morally certain, is not at all inconsistent with well-known facts of that age. Dionysius of Corinth, for example, complains of those who had mutilated his epistles, by taking from and adding to them. (Eus. E. H. 4, 23.)

Tertullian, about A.D. 200, and *Lactantius*, of the fourth century, say that Peter died at Rome ; the latter adds, In the time of Nero. But we have no proof that they ever searched into the truth of the story. Some even affirm that Peter was crucified with his head downward, he himself so desiring it. (Eus. 2, 25, and 3, 1.) Such miserable stuff "taken from the drag-net of antiquity" betrays a writer of a sickly mind, pleased with fables. Traditions, like snow-balls, lose nothing as they roll on.

The story that Peter was Bishop of Rome for twenty or twenty-five years, is a pure fiction, unsupported by credible testimony. Neither Clement of Rome, the most unexceptionable witness, nor Irenæus, nor Caius of Rome, nor Tertullian, nor Lactantius, so testify. "This view also contradicts the plainest facts of the New Testament, and cannot stand a moment before the bar of criticism." *Eusebius* and *Jerome* first gave currency to this ridiculous story. How they enlarged their throats to swallow such a camel, is hard to say. Perhaps their time-serving had something to do with it, and the abominable dogma concerning "pious frauds." (See Hodge, Sys. Theol., vol. 3, p. 449.)

From this review of ancient testimony, it appears most probable that the whole story as to Peter's preaching and death at Rome originated from and was upheld by the unhallowed ambition of the prelates of that city ; who as early as the days of Irenæus were contending for the pre-eminence, and who availed themselves of interpolated works, apocryphal writings, wresting of Scripture, especially of Mat.

16 : 18, 19, and whatever seemed likely to increase their power ; among which things not the least was the credulity, or neglect of critical examination, by some who in other respects were able and excellent men.

It is absolutely certain that Peter was never Bishop of Rome, and that the popes are not his successors in that see, are not supreme governors by divine right over the church universal, and over kings and nations : for Peter himself had no primacy of power and jurisdiction over the other apostles, and Christ did not appoint him emperor of the world ; and Peter could not transfer to others what he himself had not. Besides, it is the perfection of folly to suppose that any fallible man can be competent for such an office ; even if a hundred councils should proclaim him infallible : and it is blasphemy to pretend that he is the Vicar of Christ and Vicegerent of God on earth.

III. *The Persons primarily addressed.*

These are the same as those addressed in the first epistle, namely, Jewish converts dwelling in the five provinces of Asia Minor. 1 Ep. 1 : 1, with 2 Ep. 3 : 1.

IV. *The Scope of the Epistle.*

The chief design is to assure us of the certainty of Christ's second coming as King and Judge ; of the indispensable necessity of constantly increasing holiness, in order to a triumphal admission into His everlasting kingdom ; and to warn us against the wiles of false teachers, scoffers and their followers, as well as to predict the awful doom that will overtake them when the Lord hath come.

A subordinate design is to give his testimony to the agreement of Paul with himself as to the leading subjects of both epistles, and particularly of this second epistle ; and, in opposition to false teachers, to impress the seal of his approval on Paul's Epistles as truly inspired writings. And

the necessity of Peter's testimony in the matter is implied.
1 Ep. 5 : 12.

In the first epistle the Apostle arms his readers against trials and persecutions, in the second against heretics and mockers ; but in both he magnificently proclaims Him who is " our Hope."

COMMENTARY.

CHAPTER I.

I. After the inscription and salutation, the doctrinal exordium follows, in which there is a general description of the abundant qualifications conferred on the apostles by Jesus our Lord, and a statement of the great design of those gracious endowments, 1-4.

II. An animated exhortation to the cultivation of constantly increasing holiness, in its various but inseparable forms ; based on the doctrinal exordium, and enforced by other motives, 5-11.

III. The propriety of the Apostle's zeal in the matter vindicated, 12-21.

¹ Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness (marg. of our God and Saviour) of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ : ² grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

Some copies have *Simeon*, as in Acts 15 : 14, which corresponds more to the Hebrew word than *Simon*. The full name is used, to certify in the most unambiguous manner that the epistle was indeed written by the great Apostle of the circumcision : not any other Simon or Simeon, but Simon Peter, *a servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ*.

A servant of Jesus the Messiah, as Moses and Joshua were servants of Jehovah : a servant from choice and love of Jehovah incarnate ; *a servant of Jesus our Lord*, or Ado-

nai—*i.e.*, our Supreme Ruler, Owner and Master. Cf. 1 Ep. 3 : 15, and notes on Jas. 1 : 1, 2 : 1. *An apostle* : notes on 1 Pet. 1 : 1.

To them that have obtained, gratuitously received ; the allusion in the word being to what falls to one by lot : as in Lk. 1 : 9 ; Jno. 19 : 24 ; Acts 1 : 17, the only other places where it is found. Faith is metaphorically described as a portion allotted, or a possession given them, by God's grace ; and it is called *precious*—*i.e.*, costly or valuable, because imperishable : cf. 1 Ep. 1 : 7, and Jas. 2 : 5, " rich in faith." Also, because it concentrates its energy in, or leans on, the righteousness of Him who is both our God and Saviour. *Like precious faith with us apostles*—*i.e.*, equally precious with that faith which I and other apostles have (see how us and we are distinguished from ye and you, vs. 3, 4, 16 ; cf. ver. 13) : Gr. *In the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ* : this faith centring in the righteousness, etc., as its object ; as in Rom. 3 : 25. " By faith in his blood." 1 Jno. 4 : 9. " Hereby was manifested the love of God in us." Gr., centring in us as its objects. Faith is here described from the great object on which it as a mental power acts, or in which it concentrates its energy ; or, if any prefer it, from the immovable foundation on which it leans ; or the element in which it lives and moves : all amounting to the same thing, and equally consistent with the meaning and usage of the preposition.

Faith in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ : in these words Peter alludes to, and shows how he understands, Rom. 1 : 17 ; 3 : 21–26 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21 ; Phil. 3 : 9, and similar passages, as well as his perfect agreement with Paul in the doctrine of justification. And this allusion to, or brief explication of, the Pauline phraseology is peculiarly significant, when we recollect what is written. Gal. 2 : 11–21.

Grace unto you and peace be multiplied, *in the acknowledgment of God, and of Jesus our Lord*. This addition to

the former salutation, 1 Ep. 1 : 2, is very appropriate, since it shows how grace and peace are multiplied. It is also in perfect keeping with one main design of the present letter, which is to refute those who vainly boast of their knowledge—viz., false teachers and mockers.

Gr., *epignosis* = *acknowledgment*—i.e., knowledge and confession. So Peter also uses it, vs. 3, 8, and 2 : 20. A knowledge and profession of God and of Jesus our Lord may be "inactive and unfruitful," or the contrary. Here an *epignosis* inseparably connected with holy living is intended. In Pauline usage *epignosis* means a further or more accurate knowledge, as in Rom. 3 : 20 ; 10 : 2 ; but this Peter expresses by "growth in knowledge," 2 Ep. 3 : 16.

In the acknowledgment, etc.—i.e., either in and by, through, as in Eng. Vers. ; or, living and moving in, abiding in, this knowledge and profession, as in 1 Ep. 1 : 22 ; which we prefer.

The faith described in this context belongs to God's elect ; it is a portion allotted to them by their Father in Christ, a gift of love from the God of love. 1 Ep. 1 : 2 ; Eph. 2 : 8. And it is equally precious in all believers, being the same in kind, though not in degree ; equally precious with the faith of Peter, Paul and John, and this because the righteousness of the Redeemer is a perfectly legal foundation for the justification of them all. And it is so, inasmuch as it is not simply the righteousness of a sinless man, but of the God-man, His righteousness as our legal representative and surety, as is most fully portrayed in the epistles to the Romans and Galatians. (See notes on Jas. 2 : 14-26.)

Faith cannot exist without a knowledge of the Father's love as shown in the work of our Redeemer, but there may be knowledge without grace. The plan of redemption may be in a measure understood, and yet disliked ; Christ, too, may be acknowledged as a deliverer from evil, when He is rejected as Lord. Truth may be discerned, while sin is loved. 2 : 1, 20 ; Tit. 1 : 13-16.

A K L S have Simeon, B Simon. Some take *faith* objectively, and understand the clause thus : To them that have gratuitously received a divine revelation of equal value to them as to us, in consequence of the fidelity of God and of Christ. But this interpretation is untenable : (1.) Because "your faith," ver. 5, which refers to "faith" here, must be subjectively understood. (2.) It assumes that *righteousness* here means fidelity, or a fulfilment of O. T. promises ; which is strained. (3.) It takes for granted that both God and our Saviour are here spoken of, whereas the construction of the original shows that Jesus Christ is here designated as our God and Saviour. (4.) It also assumes that this clause is equivalent in meaning to vs. 3, 4. But there is no necessity of supposing such a tautology. *Our God and Saviour Jesus Christ* : The divinity of Christ does not indeed depend upon what some not over-wisely call grammatical niceties ; yet Winer himself admits that there is no grammatical objection in explaining Tit. 2 : 13, of one person—*i.e.*, Christ ; and that his own doctrinal opinions concerning the Pauline theology led him to interpret that text otherwise. (Section xix. towards the end, and footnote 2.) But in this chapter, ver. 11, and 2 : 20 ; 3 : 18, the grammatical construction is precisely the same as in 1 : 1, and all hold that in these texts Christ alone is designated. Where, then, is the necessity of interpreting differently when the word "God" is used by the Apostle ? Our dogmas, whether philosophical or religious, are not to be substituted for "grammatico-historical exegesis." Besides, our Apostle commands us to sanctify Christ as Jehovah in our hearts, 1 Ep. 3 : 15, and ever to approach Him as such, 2 : 3, 4, and by his own example teaches us to adore Him as worthy of both present and eternal glory. 2 Ep. 3 : 18. Now, if he calls Christ Jehovah, why not also our God and Saviour ? Cf. Isa. 25 : 9.

S has *eis dikaiosunen tou Kuriou*, etc. ; in which it is singular, but the sense is : *Faith directed to the righteousness of our Lord (Jehovah or Adonai) and Saviour Jesus Christ*. But the c. t. is so well supported that Tischendorf (ed. 7) mentions no variations.

2. Some render *epignosis* by true knowledge ; but this disregards the explanatory adjuncts "inactive and unfruitful as to this epignosis," ver. 8 ; and if they hold that the word by itself means saving knowledge, this interpretation (for it is not a translation) contradicts 2 : 20–22, to say nothing of Rom. 1 : 28. Heb. 10 : 26.

* According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to (marg. by) glory and virtue : 'whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises ; that by these ye might be partakers

of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Here we have the doctrinal exordium, which is a general description of the abundant qualifications conferred on the apostles, and the great design of those gracious endowments. A more literal translation : As His divine power hath given us all the things relating to life and godliness, through the acknowledgment of Him who called us by His own glory and energy, through which He hath given us the exceeding great and precious promises ; in order that through these ye might become partakers of a divine nature, having escaped from the corruption in the world in lust.

The protasis is contained in these verses, the apodosis begins at the fifth verse : Since His divine power hath given us these gifts and promises in order that, etc., do ye also for this very reason, etc. *Tapros* = the things (gifts) relating to ; as in Acts 28 : 10 ; Rom. 15 : 17 ; Heb. 5 : 1. *Life*, in an emphatic sense, as in 1 Pet. 3 : 7, eternal life as the goal or terminus, and *godliness* as the way to reach or obtain it. *By His own glory and energy* : energy, *arete*, is manifested power ; as also in ver. 5 ; 1 Ep. 2 : 9 ; Phil. 4 : 8 (not found elsewhere), which is also the meaning of *virtue* in Eng. Vers. Mk. 5 : 30 ; Lk. 6 : 19 ; 8 : 46. Glory as distinguished from energy is manifested grace, in which pre-eminently appears the glory of Christ. Cf. Eph. 1 : 6. *Who called us*—i.e., as disciples and apostles. *Doreomai*, a middle deponent, twice used in the perfect, should be rendered *hath given* ; not “hath given,” and “are given,” as in Eng. Vers. (Cf. the aorist, Mk. 15 : 45.) *Promises*, literally taken, as in 3 : 13. *A divine nature* : no article in the Greek, as there is ver. 3. *Having escaped*, or having fled, *from the corruption*, turning away with horror, or avoiding with disgust, the moral rottenness or abominable behavior (very striking and significant metaphors) *in the world in lust*. The corruption is *in lust*, as its primal fountain or source ; like poison in a cup, like an effect in its proximate cause. (Notes on Jas. 1 : 14, 15.) “Through lust” con-

veys the same thought, but in a feeble manner. *Corruption* here, as in 2 : 12, 19, denotes spiritual death in its most loathsome effects, which *is contained in lust*, or that inordinate desire which is opposed to God and His holy law. And this abominable wickedness *appears in the world*, or in multitudes of the unrenewed on earth : world, by metonymy. Accordingly the sense in our idiom is as follows : Having escaped from the corruption appearing in the world, and which is contained in lust.

But since this exordium is generally explained of effectual calling, and of that only, it is proper to justify our interpretation by a brief but careful analysis of the passage.

1. *Who* is designated in the phrase, *His* divine power hath given us? Some refer the pronoun to *God* ; others to *Jesus our Lord* ; and others to both, with a special reference to the latter, who is the *Theanthropic Giver* or distributor of what comes from God. (Since *Theanthropos* means the God-man, the cognate adjective is very convenient, and both words should be Anglicized.) And this mode of explanation is perfectly accordant with Petrine usage : as in Acts 2 : 33. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he (Jesus our Lord, the Exalted One) hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear."

2. *What* are the gifts spoken of, and *to whom* did our Lord give them? His divine power hath given *us*, us apostles, who are thus distinguished from the believers addressed thrice in this exordium. Cf. vs. 1, 2, and vs. 12-16. *All the things relating to life and godliness*, all the gifts pertaining to eternal life as the goal and piety as the way to reach it. Now it is self-evident that all the gifts relating to life and godliness are not that life and godliness, but indispensable prerequisites for obtaining them. Besides, *all these gifts* (not a part or a few of them, as in 1 Ep. 4 : 10) are here expressly spoken of ; all the extraordinary *charismata*, gracious endowments or Spiritual Gifts which Jesus our Lord gave to Peter and the rest of the apostles as the

indispensable prerequisites for discharging the duties of their office, or to lead men to life and godliness.

These gifts are (1.) *Revelation*, or the direct communication of divine truth to the minds of the apostles by Jesus our Lord. Hence Peter says, 3 : 15, that Paul wrote according to the wisdom given him ; alluding to Eph. 3 : 2, 3, ' the plan of God's grace given me,' ' the revelation of the mystery made known to me.' And Paul declares to the Galatians that he was taught and received the Gospel only by revelation from Jesus Christ, 1 : 11, 12 ; which is equally true of the other apostles. (2.) *Inspiration*, or their infallibility in teaching that revealed truth, both orally and by writing. Hence it is written, 1 Cor. 2 : 13, " which things" (the things graciously given or revealed to us) " we also speak, not in the taught words of human wisdom, but in the taught words of the Spirit, explaining spiritual thoughts by spiritual words." (Cf. 1 Cor. 14 : 37 ; 1 Jno. 4 : 6.) So clearly is it affirmed that the divine truths revealed to the apostles are expressed in the New Testament with the greatest possible accuracy ; not in language taught by human science or philosophy, or of the apostles' own selection merely, but in words taught by the Spirit. (3.) *The signs of an apostle*, or the various miracles which Jesus our Lord wrought by His apostles in confirmation of their commission. 2 Cor. 12 : 12 ; Mk. 16 : 20.

Peter alludes to all the spiritual gifts, and a particular description of them is found in 1 Cor. 12, which description or classification may be generalized as above ; or they may all be logically described as Gifts of Knowledge and of Power, or Gifts of Teaching and of Service, designed for the advantage of the church, or to guide men to Life and Godliness. But however classified, the apostles had *all* these gifts, and they alone.

3. By what means were the apostles mentally and morally prepared for the reception of all these gifts? *Through the acknowledgment of Him who called us by His own glory and energy—i.e., through the knowledge and profession which*

we apostles received and made concerning Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God, who called us, both as disciples and apostles, by His own energy—that is, by an exercise of His divine power, and by His own glory, or by a manifestation of His glorious grace : Peter thus modestly alluding to what is written, Mat. 16 : 13–20 ; Mk. 8 : 27–30 ; Lk. 9 : 18–21.

4. What is the relation of the gifts to the exceeding great and precious promises ? How were they given to the apostles as distinguished from the believers addressed ? And what is the cream or substance of these promises ?

All the things relating to life and godliness are the sum total of the Spiritual gifts, and the promises are a part of the whole. Jesus our Lord, by the gracious and powerful illumination of His Spirit, *gave* these promises to the apostles—*i.e.*, revealed in this manner the promises to them, or intrusted them with the promises as a sacred gift or deposit, to be by them made known and communicated to all believers. So in 1 Cor. 2 : 12, “ the things freely given us by God,” are equivalent to “ God revealed them to us by the Spirit,” ver. 10. And the rich cream of these exceeding great and precious promises may all be summed up in the words Life and Godliness, or they are all descriptive of “ Grace and Glory.” They all point to that delightful terminus, the glorification in their complete nature of believers with Christ ; not excluding the earnest of it in the world as it now is. 1 Ep. 1 : 2–13 ; 4 : 13, 14 ; 5 : 1, 4, 10 ; 2 Ep. 1 : 10, 11 ; 3 : 13 ; Rom. 8 : 16–23 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 14.

5. For what great purpose did our Lord endow the apostles with the charismata in general, and intrust them with the promises in particular ? It has already been intimated in the expression, ‘ the gifts *relating to life and godliness*,’ but it is again and admirably described in the words that follow : *In order that through these—i.e.*, by these promises divinely revealed, infallibly recorded as well as miraculously attested, and embraced by faith, *ye might*

become partakers of a divine nature, having fled from the corruption in the world in lust—i.e., that in this manner ye might at last be perfectly delivered from sin or moral corruption, loathing it to all eternity, and attain the highest conformity to God of which men are capable. (Cf. 1 Pet. I : 14-16.)

Now, what exordium, in an epistle predicting and warning against false teachers, can be more suitable than one which modestly but briefly and powerfully describes the abundant qualifications of Christ's apostles, and the blessed design for which they were so endowed?

3. A C S sah vg Did Cyril by his own glory and energy, *idia doxe kai arete* (datives), which we hold to be genuine; but B K L Oec Thph through his glory and energy, *dia doxes kai aretes*. If this reading be preferred, *dia* with the gen. must be understood of efficiency, as in Rom. II : 36. *As* His divine power hath given us; *as* with the genitive absolute denotes subjective conviction, as in 1 Pet. 4 : 12 = since we know well, or are fully persuaded, that His divine power, etc. *To* glory and virtue, is wholly wrong, since *dia* with the genitive never indicates the final cause, but must be rendered *by* or *through*. Into this unhappy mistake our translators seem to have been led by Beza : *ad gloriam ac virtutem*. To explain *life and godliness*, by hendiadys, as = a godly life, is needless, and weakens the sense; in fact, mutilates the Apostle's meaning.

4. *Partakers of a divine nature, theias koinonoi phuseos*; not, partakers of the divine nature. To partake of the divine nature, in the sense of essence or substance, is for all creatures impossible. And to imagine that the souls of intelligent beings are derived by emanation out of the essence of God, is to recall from hell the Gnostic heresy.

There is indeed an incomprehensible mystery in the regeneration and sanctification of men by the Holy Spirit, but this is certain—namely, that God's essence is not infused into the regenerated and sanctified. They become "partakers of His holiness," Heb. 12 : 10, or they become like God in knowledge, moral purity and bliss. Col. 3 : 10; Eph. 4 : 22-24. *Nature*, then, as here used by Peter, does not mean essence or substance, but disposition and permanent qualities, intellectual and moral; the gradual restoration of that image in which man was originally created. In other words, the highest conformity to God of which men are capable.

* And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith

virtue ; and to virtue knowledge ; ⁶ and to knowledge temperance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; ⁷ and to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity. ⁸ For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But he that lacketh these things is blind, and can not see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. ¹⁰ Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure : for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall : ¹¹ for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The exhortation based on the doctrinal exordium, and enforced by other powerful motives.

The first motive precedes the exhortation : *And indeed for this very reason*, etc. Since His divine power hath given us all the spiritual gifts, and intrusted us with the promises, for the great purpose just stated, vs. 3, 4, do not suppose that there is no corresponding obligation resting upon you to embrace and obey the Revelation which we have received from Him, *but for this very reason also* do ye add to your faith, etc.

The manner of cultivating the virtues enjoined : by *giving all diligence* ; or, bringing in on your part all diligence, employing the greatest zeal and most earnest efforts. Cf. Phil. 3 : 13, 14. Lit. *Bringing in alongside*, or *therewith*, all diligence, which is the same as introducing it as a co-worker ; it being metaphorically employed to designate intelligent co-operation with divine revelation, or " the purification of the soul in obeying the truth." 1 Ep. 1 : 22. And the phrase, *all diligence* shows that believers cannot be too zealous and active in the matter.

The exhortation : And indeed for this very reason, bringing in on your part all diligence, *furnish in your faith energy*, etc. *Furnish in* is in sense the same as add to ; but

the preposition *in* is equivalent to *in connection with*, or it is used to denote inseparable union. All the graces of the Spirit in a renewed soul lie *in* or close to each other, as links in a golden chain, to be brightened (supplied or furnished with greater brilliancy) by holy diligence. Cf. 2 Cor. 7 : 1. The Apostle takes it for granted that they had these virtues, but they are required to furnish in one virtue another and another ; add to, or increase their strength and beauty. Faith, too, is presupposed as existing and as the primal link with which all the rest are conjoined, and on which they are suspended.

Furnish in connection with your faith, the faith previously described, "faith in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ," *energy*—*i.e.*, manifested power ; fortitude or boldness in the performance of duty ; Christian manliness or heroism. (Cf. 1 Cor. 16 : 13, and note on 2 Pet. 1 : 3.)

A Christian hero, while discharging difficult duties, looks away from every thing else to Jesus his Lord, obeys His orders, and so tramples under foot the fear of man. He adds to his faith energy, by "girding up the loins of his mind," or bracing his will, so as to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

Daniel added to his faith energy ; and with what holy beauty did he appear among blood-thirsty idolators ! Paul did not count his life dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy. What a holy will, what indomitable energy combined with faith in Christ he exhibited ! And the same may justly be said of Peter.

And in connection with energy knowledge : knowledge of the Gospel in general, and of your duty to Christ in particular, 3 : 18 ; and, by implication, the prudence resulting from such knowledge, 1 Ep. 3 : 7. Exercise the one in constant and inseparable union with the other : for the understanding is to the will what the eye is to the arm. Energy without knowledge is a blind random-moving thing, but

energy with knowledge discerns clearly whither it is going, and at what it aims, and hence every blow tells.

There is an energy proceeding mainly from bodily temperament, which is neither virtuous nor vicious ; short-lived, however, dying with failing health. But Christian energy is indestructible, growing with knowledge even unto the end ; nimble on the rugged cliffs of the narrow way, since it sees the glory soon to be revealed. A wise man in Christ is strong, active and bold.

To put ourselves willingly in the way of danger, is not combining energy with knowledge. Mat. 10 : 23. And to court martyrdom in a self-righteous spirit, is to woo folly, wed bigotry, and die as Satan's martyrs, merely for opinion's sake. 1 Cor. 13 : 3. Rash and self-willed dogmatists differ much from energetic knowing Christians.

To believe without examination what the church teaches is called by Romanists " implicit faith," and is enjoined as a duty, especially on the unlearned. Hence their clergy keep for themselves the key of knowledge, and exercise a despotic dominion over the faith of the people. (1 Pet. 5 : 3 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 24.) But Peter commands all Christians, in the name of Jesus our Lord, to add to their faith energy, and to energy knowledge. They are not to be mere passive recipients of instruction good and bad, like sponges which absorb both pure water and foul.

And those in Protestant churches who are satisfied with a knowledge of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ are, while disobeying a plain command, like raw recruits in an army ; fearful and trembling when toils and dangers are in sight and to be overcome. But they who go on to perfection, obtaining daily more enlarged views of what is revealed, seeing clearly their peculiar duties and the glorious rewards, proceed with the heart and step of veterans where the Great Captain calls and leads. (Heb. 6 : 1.)

And in connection with knowledge self-control : lit. inward dominion, or strength ; hence self-government, rule

over one's spirit, dominion over evil appetites and passions. The word *temperance*, as now used, does not give the full meaning of the original. Cf. Acts 24 : 25 ; Gal. 5 : 23, and the cognate adjective, Tit. 1 : 8. (Not found elsewhere.) The sense is : Let your knowledge of Christ and duty exist in intimate union with the government of yourselves. Strive to strangle not one or two, but all the hissing vipers within you. If we disregard this precept, we shall be like a city broken down and without walls ; an easy prey to Satan and his hosts, led captive at their will. But if we give heed to it, we will be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man.

And in connection with self-control patience : perseverance or steadfast endurance. While subduing evil affections working within, bear up under the storms of outward calamities. (Jas. 1 : 2-4 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 10.) And do not be discouraged because of the difficulty experienced in governing yourselves, but persevere, and never surrender.

And in connection with patience godliness : or reverence towards God imbued with love and gratitude ; a supreme and constant desire to please Him in all we say, do, or suffer. 1 Pet. 4 : 11, 16 ; Col. 1 : 10, 11. Patience combined with piety is very different from that which may be called Stoical apathy, or a cold-hearted submission to what is inevitable.

And in connection with godliness brotherly kindness. (Cf. notes on 1 Pet. 1 : 22-25, and especially on the first Epistle of John.)

And in connection with brotherly kindness love—i.e., philanthropy, love to man as man, which is shown by benevolence and beneficence, even to enemies. 1 Ep. 2 : 17 ; 3 : 9, etc.

These are the seven links of the golden chain, all fastened to and hanging on faith in Christ's righteousness ; or, the glittering gems set in the diamond casket of precious faith. Do we use all diligence in giving them additional brilliancy ? Or do we disregard these apostolic injunctions proceed-

ing from Jesus our Lord ; these precepts of our God and Saviour ?

The second motive : *For these things being yours, and increasing, make you stand not inactive nor unfruitful as to the acknowledgment of our Lord Jesus Christ—i.e., for your possession of and increase in these virtues make it manifest that your knowledge and profession of Christ both as Saviour and Lord are unfeigned : that ye are not idlers in His vineyard, or like trees that yield no fruit. 2 : 20, 21.*

Lit. *These things subsisting to you* = ye possessing these virtues (as I take for granted), having them as the wealth of the soul. Cf. Acts 3 : 6, Gr. *Set down, or make to stand* is the primary meaning of the verb. Acts 17 : 15, Gr. It is here used by a metaphor, and is = render conspicuous, clearly prove, or demonstrate. These virtues make you stand, cause you to appear, not as idlers or unholy professors, which, expressed in a positive form, is the same as, Prove you to be active and holy as to your acknowledgment of Christ. *Inactive* or *idle* (not barren, or unworked like fallow ground), Gr. *argos* : in 2 : 3, *ouk argei* = lingereth not ; comes not "with lingering steps and slow," or as an idler walks. *T. Smith* : Absque harum virtutum praxi et copia, professio Christi quam præ vobis fertis, nec vobis nec aliis utilis futura est. But the Apostle speaks not simply of the utility of a holy profession of Christ, but of such a profession as demonstrating the sincerity of those who call themselves Christians.

The third motive, which is an illustration of the miserable state of a stupid unholy professor : Lit. *For he to whom these things are not present (who has them not, as the possession or wealth of the soul, and whose non-possession of them I now take for granted ; which is intimated by the subjective negative) is blind, being nearsighted, forgetful of the cleansing of his old sins.*

The metaphors explicated : He who has not these virtues

is *blind*—*i.e.*, like one blind. As a blind man cannot see any external object, not even the sun in its brightness; so an unholy professor is morally incapable of discerning the glory of Christ as Saviour and Lord, which is the great object of saving knowledge. 3 : 18; 2 Cor. 4 : 3-6; Phil. 3 : 8. Neither does he perceive the beauty of holiness, vs. 5-7, nor the greatness and excellency of the rewards to be distributed in our Lord's everlasting kingdom, ver. 11. So ignorant and stupid he is, or wholly destitute of spiritual discernment as to the great things revealed by the Spirit to both prophets and apostles. Cf. 1 Cor. 2 : 6-16; 1 Pet. 1 : 10-12. He is also *nearsighted*; "seeing from birth the things that are near, not those at a distance" (as Aristotle explains *muops*): like one with such a natural defect, an unholy professor looks only at the things which are near to, and that naturally obtrude themselves on the notice and attention of all the unsanctified; he minds earthly things, and them only. 2 Cor. 4 : 18; Phil. 3 : 19; 1 Jno. 2 : 15-17. A practical regard to God and Christ, and the way to eternal glory with Christ, are to him "a height, far out of his sight;" not near enough for such a grovelling soul to see, since his sordid affections contract his mental eyelids, or direct the eye of his mind only to things which perish in the using. Like the Muck-rake man in Bunyan's allegory, he sees the straws near him, but not "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Forgetful: strictly, *taking*, or *seizing forgetfulness in respect of the cleansing of his old sins*. Laying hold of forgetfulness, is either a pleonasm, a graphic circumlocution = forgetful, as in Heb. 2 : 3, Gr. ; or it indicates eagerness and the consent of the will, *seizing forgetfulness*, = *striving to forget*: which we prefer. Cf. Rom. 7 : 8, 11. *Old sins* are sins formerly committed = *former lusts*. 1 Pet. 1 : 14. What he wishes and endeavors to forget, and of course practically disregards, is *the cleansing of his old sins*: which is a metonymy for baptism; the thing signified being put for the sign or symbolical action that represents it to the eye.

(Cf. Jno. 3 : 25, 26. " A question . . . about *cleansing*. The same *baptizeth*." Acts 22 : 16. " Be baptized and wash away thy sins.") The sense : Striving to forget the profession made and the obligations assumed at his baptism, and showing it by returning to sins formerly committed.

An adult when baptized signifies thereby, or professes to have, faith in Christ's blood for the forgiveness of sins, and faith in the Holy Spirit to sanctify, as well as love to the Father. In other words, In baptism cleansing from the guilt and dominion of sin by the blood and Spirit of Christ, is signified ; and by it men openly profess their faith in the Triune God, and consecrate themselves to His service ; promising to obey all the commandments of the only Mediator between God and men. Mat. 28 : 18-20. But he who practically forgets all this, must not flatter himself that his sins have been forgiven and his soul cleansed. Cf. 1 Pet. 3 : 21. What doth it profit such that with their mouth they renounced sin, Satan and the world, when the life nullifies the profession ?

The third motive, then, may be thus stated : Cultivate most diligently these virtues ; for he who has them not is in a most miserable condition, blind to the glory of Christ, the beauty of holiness and the awards of the great day ; a worldly-minded man, in the church but not of it, regarding trifles only ; and with a hardened conscience, since he acts as if he wished never to remember what he professed and promised at his baptism.

Wherefore, brethren, be the more diligent to make your calling and election sure ; for, doing these things, ye shall never stumble ; for so there shall be richly furnished unto you the entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The fourth motive, presented in the form of an exhortation to make their calling and election sure, and showing the mode of doing it, with the final gracious and glorious result. And this modification of the preceding precepts

contains in fact three additional motives : Furnish in your faith energy and the other before-named graces of the Spirit, and that with the greatest diligence : (1.) For so only can ye obtain an indubitable conviction or assurance of your calling and election. (2.) And of the moral impossibility of failure, or blasted hope ; or know beyond a doubt that ye shall escape the doom of the blind and unholy professor. (3.) And through God's grace enter triumphantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Wherefore—i.e., in order to escape the present miserable condition, and the future awful doom of the stupid and unholy professor, ver. 9; cf. 2 : 9, 17, do ye as brothers in Christ prefer the better course, or *be more diligent* than ever before in making your calling, etc.

To make our calling and election sure, is to become convinced by unquestionable evidence of our regeneration, and hence of our election by God ; or that we are "the called according to His purpose." Rom. 8 : 28. "Who regenerated us"—*i.e.*, the chosen. 1 Pet. 1 : 2, 3. *The Lord knew* from eternity them that are His, and they all depart from iniquity. 2 Tim. 2 : 19. They are chosen *according to the foreknowledge of God* with a view to obedience and sprinkling with the blood of Jesus. 1 Ep. 1 : 2. It is self-evident, then, that we are to make the calling and election sure to ourselves. And this is an unquestionable duty : we are not to remain in doubt about it. The Apostle puts calling before election, because he is speaking of the order of our knowledge in the matter.

The calling intended is not simply a calling out of the world and an introduction into the church with the privileges thereof ; for the persons addressed were already in this manner in the church, and there was no need of diligence to prove that fact. But it is a calling out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus. 1 Ep. 2 : 9 ; 5 : 10.

But *how* can an infallible proof, or a sure mental conviction, of this calling and election be obtained ? Not by liv-

ing on variable frames and feelings, not by confounding comfort with holiness, but by *doing these things*, the diligent cultivation and practice of the before-named virtues: "bringing in all diligence furnish in your faith energy," etc. Progressive sanctification is an indubitable proof of your regeneration, and that of your election. Cf. 1 Thes. 1: 3-5. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, *manifested in sanctification of the Spirit*," etc. 1 Ep. 1: 2.

Be very diligent in this matter; *for, doing these things, ye shall never stumble*; never fail of ultimate success—i.e., of admission into the kingdom; never stumble in the race for eternal glory. So the metaphor is best explained, as is evident from what follows: *For thus there shall be richly furnished unto you the entrance*, etc. *For so*—i.e., adorned with these virtues, or by doing these things. This by no means proves that our virtues merit such a reward; but it does prove that the most careful cultivation of these graces is the only way that leads to Christ's kingdom. Neither does it show that God's grace is to be ignored; for the expression, *there shall be richly furnished unto you the entrance*, etc., implies that His Grace is to be very conspicuously exhibited both in enabling us to persevere in holy living, and to reign with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in His everlasting kingdom: for the chosen and called of this and preceding dispensations are to enter it as His co-regents. (Cf. vs. 16-21, and notes on Jas. 1: 12; 2: 5.)

Furnish in your faith energy, etc.; *for so*, or by doing these things, *there shall be richly furnished unto you*, etc.; the Apostle in this manner not only intimating the greatness of God's grace, but also His equity and faithfulness: His equity, since it is fit that the holy alone should reign with Christ; his faithfulness, inasmuch as He has often foretold and promised it by prophets and apostles.

5. B C K L *kai auto tonto de*, as c. t., S with a different order *kai arto de tonto*; A vg *kai autoi de*. The c. t. is best supported. We have rendered *kai . . . de, and indeed*, and at the same time have

shown the literal meaning by a paraphrase. Lit. *and yet*, or *but also*: connection and contrast being indicated, since both particles retain their distinctive meaning. Cf. 1 Jno. 1 : 3 ; Jno. 8 : 16, 17 ; 15 : 27, and Acts 3 : 24, where Peter speaks.

Epichoregesate : the verb in the N. T. is always used in its secondary signification = supply or furnish. There is no allusion to a dance or graceful motion of the virtues led by faith (Doddridge), or to a clasping of the hands in such a promenade (Benson) ; as is clear from ver. 11, where the same verb occurs. See also 2 Cor. 9 : 10 ; Gal. 3 : 5 ; Col. 2 : 19, Gr. ; the cognate noun, Eph. 4 : 16 ; Phil. 1 : 19 ; and *choregeo*. 1 Pet. 4 : 11 ; 2 Cor. 9 : 10. Neither is the metaphor derived from the erection of a house, as in Jude, ver. 20. To furnish in, is one thing ; to build one's self upon, is another.

8. B C K L S *huparchonta*, as c. t. ; A sah vg *paronta*. As to, *eis* ; so in Rom. 4 : 20. 10. B C K L as c. t. to make your calling, etc. ; S cop sah vg through the good works ye make, etc. The c. t. is preferable, since the good works or virtues have already been twice mentioned ; "doing these things," "for so," etc., ver. 11. But either way, the sense is the same.

Ye shall never stumble (not fall, from which it is distinguished, Rom. 11 : 11 ; cf. Jude, ver. 24, and Xen. Cyr. 3, 1, 26), or, ye can by no means stumble hereafter : two negatives, with *pote* referring to the future, the great day of Christ's appearing as king, ver. 11. The translation in our idiom may be thus given : *Ye shall never, no never stumble*, for thus, etc.

¹² Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth. ¹³ Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance ; ¹⁴ knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. ¹⁵ Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. ¹⁶ For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷ For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. ¹⁸ And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. ¹⁹ We have also a more sure word of prophecy ; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a

dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts: ²⁰ Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. ²¹ For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

The propriety of the Apostle's zeal in urging the preceding exhortation vindicated: 1. In no other way can ye be sure of entering into Christ's everlasting kingdom; implied in "wherefore."

2. A knowledge of and establishment in this truth does not supersede the necessity of perpetual admonitions concerning it, ver. 12.

3. Such a course is perfectly consistent with my duty as an apostle, since I know that I must soon die, even as our Lord made it clear to me; and I am now diligently employed in writing this second epistle, in order that, after my departure, ye may always have it your power to recall these things, 13-15.

4. I am especially desirous that after my exodus ye may have this epistle, for the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ as King and Judge, made known to you in our first epistle, are not fables but unquestionable facts, attested by the voice of God the Father at the Transfiguration, which we heard, and that too when we beheld the Messiah in His majesty; and so we have a surer conviction than ever before of the infallible truth of scriptural prophecy, which treats so largely of the Messiah's coming, power, and glory, 16-19.

An admonition follows as to the Prophetic Word: To which ye should give heed until Christ Himself appears, since that Word is not of human origin, but from divine revelation infallibly recorded, 19-21.

Wherefore—that is, because only by faith in connection with the other graces can we enter into our Lord's everlasting kingdom, and because there is no other way of obtaining in the present life a sure conviction of our calling and

election to that glory, vs. 10, 11, *I will not be negligent to remind you always about these things*, vs. 5-9, *although ye know and are established in the present truth*. The present truth means the truth I am now inculcating, and which is present to your minds. To know and be established (firmly fixed, cf. 1 Ep. 5 : 10, 12) in any revealed truth, is to receive it as indubitable and important, as necessary to be ever believed and obeyed. Cf. 3 : 17. The Apostle's reference to vs. 5-11, is unmistakable.

If at effectual calling every root and fibre of the sinful disposition were extirpated, perpetual admonitions to the performance of duty would be needless ; but since our inner man is renewed day by day, such admonitions, even to the most intelligent, are never out of place.

When any biblical truth is decried and perverted, or but dimly seen and feebly held, they who are set for the defence of the Gospel should clearly state and prove it, as well as exhibit its practical uses, in order that it may become present to and have a fixed existence as revealed in the mind and conscience of believers. Negligence herein on the part of professed ministers of Christ, cannot be approved by Him now or in the great day. Mat. 28 : 20.

Lit. *But I think it right, so long as I am in this tent, to awaken you by reminding ; knowing that speedy is the laying aside of my tent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ declared (made it clear) it to me*. Jno. 21 : 18, 19. But whatever may be your knowledge in the matter, I hold it to be perfectly consistent with my duty as one of Christ's apostles, to remind you of yours, since I know that my death is swiftly approaching, and that by crucifixion, precisely as our Lord foretold.

To awaken by reminding : arouse from sleep or drowsiness, and hence by a metaphor, to stir up to holy activity ; or by the most powerful motives to prevent the subtle influence of indwelling sin in gradually and almost insensibly stupefying the holy energies of the soul : as also in 3 : 1.

To be in a tent is to live in the present frail body : in this tent, by an elliptical metaphor = in this body which is a tent. But *the putting away of my tent*, by substitution, for the dissolution of the body, and its removal to the grave. Now, if a forger had written this epistle, who can suppose that he would have thought of employing this substitution to describe death by crucifixion ? With regard to Peter's human instincts, death in no form could be pleasant ("whither thou wouldst not"), but to his sanctified soul, wholly resigned to the will of his Lord and fast ripening for the paradise of the sinless dead, dying by crucifixion seemed no more to be dreaded than laying aside a tent when leaving the wilderness. So Peter by his death glorified God, attesting both the truth and the efficacy of the Gospel. Jno. 21 : 19.

God adapts the dwelling to the inhabitant. Hence those not yet sinless are in a tent, a temporary structure, easily laid aside ; but the bodies of the glorified will be like a richly furnished and immovable house. But so long as we are in the tent, we should carefully discharge the duties of our calling, keeping ourselves and others awake by kind-hearted admonitions.

When we see death swiftly approaching, it is not wise to fix our attention on the pains, real or supposed, of dying ; but, if possible, let us be more zealous than usual in efforts to promote the sanctification of our brethren. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," even in the hour of dissolution. And how can they die miserably who even while dying are seeking the glory of God and the honor of Christ ? Is a better mode of putting away our tabernacle conceivable ?

Moreover I will be diligent that on every occasion ye may be able after my exodus to call these things to mind—i.e., I will be diligent in finishing this second epistle which I am now writing, 3 : 1, in order that after my departure from this world ye may ever have it in your power to recall these admonitions. From which it clearly appears that Peter was no favorer of what his pretended successors call unwritten

apostolic traditions, and desired also that all Christians should read his epistles as a part of Holy Scripture : not supposing for a moment that such reading would be dangerous to the eternal well-being of the soul, but the contrary.

On every occasion : lit., at each time = frequently, or whenever necessary to stimulate to holy activity. He speaks of his death as an *exodus*, a departure from this world to a better, as a journey by no means to be dreaded. The metaphor seems to contain an allusion not only to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, Heb. 11 : 22, but also to the death of Jesus our Lord. Lk. 9 : 31. "Who appeared in glory, and spake of *His exodus* which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Moses and Elijah having used the word when speaking of our Lord's crucifixion, this very naturally accounts for Peter's use of it here. Such a reminiscence could only have occurred to and been suggested by a real witness of the Transfiguration. *To call these things to mind*, lit. to make a recollection of these things.

The reason for the diligence just mentioned—namely, the absolute certainty of Christ's divine power and of His second advent as the Great King : proved and illustrated from the attestation of God the Father at the Transfiguration, in perfect agreement with Scriptural Prophecy, vs. 16-19.

For we did not follow cunningly-devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. I will be diligent in leaving this permanent record of my teaching, since *the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which we apostles made known to you, is absolutely certain. In declaring that we did not deal in skilfully-contrived myths or fables, no matter what false teachers may now or hereafter affirm about it, but with our own eyes we beheld our Adonai Jesus Messiah in His majesty, or personal greatness as King ; He who is to admit the holy into His everlasting kingdom, and to exclude the unholy, ver. 11 ; 2 : 9.

His majesty, or, That One's majesty : cf. Heb. 1 : 3, "the Majesty on high"—i.e., the Father as the Great King

of the universe. And here *His majesty* refers to *our Lord Jesus Christ*, or our Jehovah Jesus the Messiah, the Theanthropic King, the Son of the Highest and the Son of David. *His parousia*, or personal coming as such, and *His power* to execute the duties of His office in glorifying the righteous and punishing the wicked, Peter made known by his pen in the first epistle. 1 : 5, 7, 13 ; 4 : 5-7, and ver. 13 ; 15 : 4. He recognizes Christ as *Jehovah* incarnate, 2 : 3, 4, 7, 8 ; 3 : 15 ; 2 Ep. 3 : 18, that Jehovah whose Spirit was in the prophets. 1 Ep. 1 : 11.

The *power* of our Lord Jesus Christ is mentioned with the most perfect propriety in connection with His coming, since it is owing to "His divine power" that He is "able to save and to destroy ;" the God-man having all the ability necessary to execute on the incorrigible the fearful threatenings contained in His Word, and to fulfil the exceeding great and precious promises to them that believe. Mat. 24 : 30-51 ; 25 : 1-46 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 5-10.

To explain "power and coming" by hendiadys as = powerful coming, weakens the sense. Lit., *Did not follow out*, or, out and out—*i.e.*, completely ; did not take such fables as our guides or competent leaders in teaching. Cf. the same word, 2 : 3, 15, and the cognate verb, 1 Ep. 2 : 21.

Peter now enters upon the main topic of the epistle—namely, the absolute certainty of Christ's second coming as King and Judge, and His power to accomplish all that has been written concerning Him as such : for (1.) No other meaning can be fairly elicited from the Apostle's words. (2.) This interpretation is alone consistent with the following context, even to the conclusion of the epistle. (3.) It is alone consistent with the preceding context : I will be diligent that ye may ever have it in your power to recollect *these things*—that is, the necessity of growth in the Christian graces in order to prove the genuineness of your knowledge and confession of Christ, the subjective assurance of your effectual calling and election by God ; and to give you the

cheering anticipation that ye shall not ultimately fail of success, but that adorned with these virtues the predicted and desired entrance shall be richly furnished unto you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I will be diligent that after my death ye may at all times be able to recall these things ; *for we did not follow cunningly-devised fables, when we made known to you the Power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of That One's Majesty.*

Calvin, in his exposition of this verse, says that Peter is showing the truth and certainty of the Gospel ; referring "power" to Christ's miracles, and "coming" to His first appearance among men. And on Mat. 16 : 28 he explains "the coming of Christ in his kingdom" of His first advent, connected with His resurrection and glory in heaven ; and that this coming was evinced by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the rapid promulgation of the Gospel thence ensuing : and herein he is followed by most interpreters.

But this interpretation is untenable. (1.) Because the preceding and subsequent context proves irrefragably that Peter is speaking of our Lord's coming as King, to admit the holy, and no others, into His everlasting kingdom. (2.) The Greek word *parousia*, used here and 3 : 4, means personal presence or coming, and when applied to our Lord always denotes His *second* personal coming to and presence in our world. It is never used in relation to His first coming. (All the texts are referred to in the notes on Jas. 5 : 7.) (3.) Neither does this word ever denote a providential coming of Christ, as many incorrectly explain it in Mat., chap. 24 ; for the comparisons in vs. 27, 37, 39, prove that it must be literally understood. (4.) This word is never used in the N. T. to signify the operations of the Spirit in giving efficacy to the preaching of the Gospel. (5.) "The coming of the Son of Man in his kingdom," spoken of in Mat. 16 : 28, has no reference to His exaltation in heaven, or to the success of His Gospel on earth after

His first advent ; as is evident from the context : “ For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels ; and then shall he reward every one according to his deeds. Verily I say unto you, There are some standing here who shall not taste death till they *see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom* ”—*i.e.*, till they see a miniature or specimen of it ; His kingdom, by metonymy, for the sign or external representation of it. And a few days after Christ was transfigured on the Holy Mount, and Peter, James, and John were eyewitnesses of His Majesty. Now, surely, our Lord did not come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and reward every one according to his deeds, at the institution of the Christian Church by the apostles ; but these things are to occur only at His second personal coming.

We were eyewitnesses of His Majesty. *For He received from God the Father honor and glory, such a voice being borne to Him beneath the greatly-becoming glory : This is my beloved Son, in whom I delighted. And this voice borne from heaven we heard, being with Him on the holy mount ; and (so) we have more sure the Prophetic Word : to which ye do well,* etc. (We prefer this mode of punctuation, since it exhibits more clearly the intimate relation or connection of the Transfiguration and the Prophetic Word.)

Honor and glory = most distinguished honor, as in 1 Ep. 1 : 7 ; Rom. 2 : 10. *The greatly-becoming glory* : glory = brightness, as in 1 Cor. 15 : 14 ; Acts 22 : 11. *Voice*, by metonymy, for the declaration or sentence uttered by the Father. The voice was borne along *beneath* the greatly-becoming glory, or came to the ears of the three apostles *from heaven*—*i.e.*, the atmosphere, in which the luminous cloud appeared, and out of which the voice of the Father proceeded, as the sacred historians testify. Mat. 17 ; Mk. 9 ; Lk. 9. The voice related *to Him*, to Christ alone. The bright cloud that overshadowed them was the sign of the Father's presence.

Peter says nothing of other remarkable incidents of the Transfiguration, since they were well known to the disciples addressed, and chiefly because his aim is to direct our attention to *the testimony of God the Father concerning the Majesty and Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The Apostle introduces this testimony of God the Father, the highest and holiest that is conceivable, in order to show that *the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, made known by the apostles in general and by himself in particular, were not fables, but infallible predictions.

This one, even Jesus now transfigured before you, His face shining as the sun and His garments bright as the light, or clothed in the robes of His Majesty, *is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I delighted*. He is *My Son*—*i.e.*, partaker of My nature, or very God. Cf. Ps. 2 : 7 ; Jno. 5 : 17, 18 ; Rom. 1 : 3, 4 ; Heb. 1 : 1-3, and vs. 5, 6, 8. *The Beloved*, the peculiar object of My love ; *in whom I delighted* (aorist), or towards whom (*eis hon*) My love was from eternity directed. "The Father loveth the Son," in a way and degree which no creature can understand, inasmuch as He loves the Son as His equal. Jno. 5 : 20 ; 10 : 30 ; Phil. 2 : 6 ; Zech. 13 : 7. He loved the Son also from eternity, as the destined Saviour of mankind, as the foreordained Messiah—*i.e.*, the Prophet-Priest-King ; to whom in time and in our nature He committed all things that relate to our present and final salvation. Isa. 42d chap. ; Jno. 3 : 35 ; Mat. 11 : 27. The Personal Greatness of our Lord, then, consists in the fact that He is the God-man ; or, that "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." But this is not all of That One's Greatness, not the whole of that to which the testimony of God the Father alludes ; for Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is not only the foreordained King of Israel, Jno. 1 : 49-51, but of the whole earth ; the very voice of God the Father on the holy mount referring to and re-echoing the decree spoken to the Son in eternity. "I will declare the decree : Jehovah said to Me, Thou art my Son. . . . Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for thine in-

heritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them (thine implacable enemies) with a rod of iron ; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (Cf. Rev. 2 : 26, 27 ; 19 : 15, 16.) . . . Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." Ps. 2. (Isa. 9 : 6, 7, is equally explicit in reference to the Messiah as the Theanthropic King of Israel.)

John was probably living at Ephesus, when this epistle was written, and in his Gospel he seems to allude to the Transfiguration : *and we beheld His Glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, 1 : 14. The witnesses of our Lord's Transfiguration were sufficient in number ; perfectly competent to perceive the change that took place in His bodily appearance, and to hear the words then and there spoken ; and their honesty as witnesses is unimpeachable. The Transfiguration, therefore, is not a myth or a fable, not a vision or a dream of a distempered imagination, not a thing partly objective and partly subjective, but a wholly objective fact, as much so as the Crucifixion itself. (To what an awful gulf the so-called mythical explanation of the Gospel History leads, is sufficiently apparent in such works as those of Strauss and Renan.)

Whether the Transfiguration occurred on Mount Tabor or Hermon, is of no practical importance. The mount is called *holy*—*i.e.*, hallowed by the extraordinary manifestations of the presence of God the Father. (Cf. Ex. 3 : 5 ; Jos. 5 : 15.)

He received from God the Father honor and glory. To explain this fact, let us listen to Christ Himself, as His words are recorded by the beloved disciple, Jno. 14 : 28 : "My Father is greater than I"—*i.e.*, greater than I am in my complex nature and official capacity. Jno. 10 : 30. "I and the Father are one"—*i.e.*, one in essence ; and hence in omnipotence and will. The Father is not greater than the Son essentially considered ; for there is an absolutely perfect oneness, not an inferiority or subordination, in the divine essence, substance, or nature. But since the Son, out of infinite love, consented to assume human nature into

everlasting union with His Godhead, in order to effect thereby our redemption, He as the Mediator between God and men, the Theanthropic Messiah, could and did receive from the Father honor and glory.

And, as a consequence of this testimony of God the Father, heard by us on the holy mount, *we have more sure the Prophetic Word—i.e.*, we have a greater subjective conviction than ever before of its infallible truthfulness ; confirmed as it is to us apostles, not only by the incarnate Son, but by the testimony of God the Father. Accordingly, ye who credit our testimony in the matter should give heed to that Word.

We have more sure the Prophetic Word : the Apostle speaks not of the objective certainty of that Word, of which neither he nor the other apostles ever entertained a doubt, but of their increased subjective conviction, or more perfect assurance, concerning it. So in ver. 10, Be diligent to make your calling and election *sure* ; subjective, not objective, certainty is intended. *The Prophetic Word* = Prophecy of Scripture, ver. 20—*i.e.*, the prophecies of the Old Testament considered as a whole. *And* = *and so*, or *and hence* ; as in 1 Pet. 5 : 4, and often elsewhere.

The main scope of the Apostle in this context should not be overlooked, or for a moment forgotten : *And so*, or by the attestation of the Father Himself, we have a more perfect assurance than ever before of the coming of the Theanthropic Messiah, and His reign on earth as the King of Israel and the Lord of the whole world, and of His power to introduce the holy into, and to exclude the unholy from His everlasting kingdom ; topics of which that Word so clearly and copiously treats. As specimens, see Ps. 2 and 72 ; Isa. 9 : 6, 7 ; Isa. 11th and 12th chapters ; Isa. 63 : 1-6 ; Ezek. 37 : 15-28 ; Dan. 7 : 13, 14, 18, 27 ; cf. Mat. 26 : 63-64 ; 19 : 28, 29 ; Jno. 1 : 49-51 ; Rev. 11 : 15-18. The second Psalm is very clear in this matter ; for it portrays in the sublimest manner rulers and nations opposing the Father and His Messiah, the destined King of the earth ; foretells

the vanity and madness of their efforts, and declares in the most unmistakable manner that the Son shall certainly reign in Zion ; and, after manifesting His power in the destruction of His implacable enemies, take possession of the whole earth, and rule over the surviving nations ; foretelling, at the same time, the unspeakable happiness of those that trust in Him. To all this the voice of God the Father on the holy mount most clearly alludes, and so certainty in reference to it is made doubly sure. And that Peter so understood it, is evident from the fact that he introduces the testimony of the Father to prove and illustrate the Power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His royal majesty, or as the great predicted King.

From this explication of the connection between the testimony of the Father at the Transfiguration and the Prophetic Word, it follows (1.) That there is no comparison of the kind so long assumed, or with respect to the relative degree of objective evidence. Prophecy as a whole is not compared with the single miracle (as some express it) of the Transfiguration, and the former more credible than the latter ; but it is declared that the testimony of the Father gave a more perfect assurance to the apostles concerning the Prophetic Word. Neither does the expression "more sure" refer to the opinion of the Jewish converts addressed : as if apostolic testimony was less valid to them than that of the ancient prophets ! as if the direct testimony of God the Father was not so sure as that of His ancient servants ! (2.) That it is wholly inadmissible to say that *more sure* means *sure* or *most sure* ; as if the Apostle must be taught by critics and commentators, or did not know what degree of comparison to use when he employed an adjective ! But this senseless mode of exegesis is now generally and justly abandoned. (3.) That the Transfiguration of our Lord is not an isolated event, and designed to add confirmation to His divine commission at the first advent ; as Neander assumes, without a single grain of solid proof. On the contrary, it is a miniature picture of the Power and Parousia of

the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ in His Majesty ; and it is most intimately connected by the attestation of God the Father with the Prophetic Word ; or with all the predictions of the O. T. which relate to the Divine Power and second coming of the Messiah.

And (hence) we have more sure the Prophetic Word : *to which ye do well that ye take heed* (and keep) *in your hearts, as to a lamp shining in a gloomy place until the day dawn, and the morning star arise.*

Lit. *Ye do well*, or discharge your duty, as in Acts 10 : 33 ; Jas. 2 : 8, by *giving heed* ; holding the mind to that Word, attending to it as becometh believers and saints. Cf. Acts 8 : 6 ; 16 : 14 ; Heb. 2 : 1. *Giving heed in your hearts* (for this is the logical order or connection of the words) is a pregnant expression, and the sense is : Directing your attention to the Prophetic Word, and keeping it in your hearts by constant meditation. Cf. Lk. 2 : 19, 51. (So in 1 Thes. 1 : 3, "Remembering without ceasing before our God and Father your work," etc., is the logical order.) *To which ye do well attending, as to a lamp shining in a gloomy place* (room or house, as in Lk. 2 : 7 ; Acts 4 : 31) *until the day dawn* (or, daylight break through) *and the morning star arise.* The words from *as to arise* show to what kind of a lamp the Prophetic Word is compared : not to one shining out of doors in the thick darkness, as in Ps. 119 : 105, but to a lamp shining in a house or room at night, and which "gives light to all who are in the house," or room, Mat. 5 : 15—except they "put it under a bushel," or voluntarily bandage their eyes. The simile, then, shows the clearness, not the obscurity, of the Prophetic Word ; at least to those who give heed to and keep it in their hearts : As a lamp shining in a room otherwise dark gives light to all that are in it, so does the Prophetic Word enlighten us as to the Power and Coming of Christ in His majesty ; and as ye properly avail yourselves of a lamp at night until it is no longer necessary, or until daylight breaks through the dark clouds and the morning star appears, so ye ought

to attend to the Prophetic Word until Christ Himself has come in the glory of His Father with His angels, to reward every one according to His deeds. This is the meaning of the condensed simile used by Christ's apostle, when considered in itself and interpreted by the light of the preceding context.

By attending to the Prophetic Word as just described ye do well ; *knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture begins to be from the prophet's own solution. For not by man's will was prophecy brought at any time, but, borne along by the Holy Spirit, spake holy men of God.*

Knowing, a causal participle = since ye know : *this first* ; this fact or truth as of the highest importance (as in 3 : 3)—namely, *that no prophecy of Scripture begins to be*, proceeds or originates, *from the prophet's own solution*, interpretation, or explication. (If the verb be rendered *is*, instead of *begins to be*, it will agree with Petrine usage. 1 Ep. 4 : 12 ; 5 : 3, Gr. Compare Jno. 7 : 17.) *For not by man's will was prophecy brought at any time* (or, *not to man's will was prophecy borne at any time*), the gift was never bestowed in that manner, *but holy men of God spoke, when borne along by the Holy Ghost—i.e.*, they taught only under His powerful influence and guidance : as ships move rapidly hither and thither under the control of mighty winds. Cf. Acts 2 : 2 ; 27 : 15, Gr. *Holy men of God*, His consecrated servants, or prophets.

The main thought is very lucidly expressed : Not a single prophecy of the Old Testament is of human origin, or of the prophet's own invention, but from divine revelation, and that written by inspired men. That this is the right interpretation, may be thus proved. (1.) No other signification can be fairly elicited from the words employed : No prophecy of Scripture *begins to be of own explanation*, is the bald literal translation—*idias epiluseos ou ginetai*. Now it is evident that the phrase, *the prophet's*, or *the writer's*, which is implied in the preceding words, Prophecy of Scripture, must be supplied in our idiom, to convey the exact thought : no

prophecy of Scripture originates from the prophet's own explication. (Cf. Acts 3 : 12. There Peter's phrase, *idia dunamei*, lit. *by own power*, is = by our own power ; the *idia* referring to *us* apostles preceding.) It is not an interpretation of God's will and counsels by the individual prophet or writer, not his own solution of that which from the very nature of the case is hidden in the mind of God ; and hidden forever, unless He be pleased to reveal it. Besides, the very idea of a prophet is a spokesman or interpreter of God ; a man inspired to make known what God has revealed to him by the Spirit. Jas. 5 : 10 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 10, 11. Scriptural Prophecy is not of human origin ; *for not by man's will was it ever brought* : here *man's will* is a further elucidation of *the prophet's own solution*, or explication. But it is of divine origin, since the prophets taught, spoke, and wrote, when under the powerful guidance of the Holy Spirit. (2.) The accuracy of this interpretation appears also from the fact that it is altogether consistent with the preceding context in assigning the ground of the Apostle's commendation : *Ye do well* in attending to the Prophetic Word as just described, *since ye know* this as a truth or fact of the first importance—namely, that no prophecy of Scripture is of human, but of divine origin. What better reason could be given for the study of Old Testament prophecy than the fact that God revealed every portion of it by inspired men, and intended it to be used as a lamp in His house until the day break, and the shadows flee away at the appearing of Christ ?

And the same may be said, with still greater emphasis, concerning "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," which, after Peter's exodus, was given, and by "the disciple whom Jesus loved," written, in order especially to enlighten us of this dispensation as to the power, coming, and everlasting kingdom of our blessed Redeemer, and as to the state of the world and the church, until He, "the bright morning star," arise, and introduce the eternal day. Rev. 1 : 3.

12. K L *ameleso*, as c. t. ; A B C S cop sah *melleso* = I will be sure, or I intend. 16. Eyewitnesses, *epoptai*, beholders, careful inspectors :

the supposed allusion to the pagan mysteries is more than doubtful. Cf. 1 Ep. 2 : 12 ; 3 : 2. "We made known to you the Power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," is the main clause ; how or in what circumstances it was done, is expressed by the participial clauses — "not after we had followed cunningly-devised fables, but after we had been beholders of His Majesty." 17. Peter has *eis hon*, not *en ho*, as in the gospels ; and he omits *hear ye Him*, since his aim is to fix our attention on the testimony of God the Father to the Sonship and Majesty of Christ : all which show an original witness, not a second-hand writer. Most translate *endokesa*, I am well pleased, or I delight ; but there is no necessity of supposing that the aorist is used for the present. 19. *As to a lamp*, etc. To speak of the day dawning and the morning star arising in human hearts, is perfectly incongruous. The plain meaning is : Ye do well in attending to the Prophetic Word until Christ Himself appears, as ye do well in using a lamp in a dark room until the day dawn, and the morning star arise. Hence the following interpretations, though advocated by able and excellent men, must be abandoned as untenable : (1.) The day, the full light of the Gospel as opposed to the law, or the dawn ; which is to confound the things compared, and miss the main scope of the Apostle. (2.) The dawn, the beginning of a work of grace in the heart ; and the day, its completion ; or, (3.) The dawn and the morning star in the heart, the superiority of the experimental evidence of Christianity : which are liable to the same objections. 20. *No prophecy of Scripture originates from the prophet's own explication* of God's will and purposes : there is no reference to the inability of the prophets to comprehend their predictions, or to their study of what God revealed by them, as in 1 Pet. I : 10-12 ; nor to the interpretation of the Prophetic Word by uninspired men. Nor is the meaning, No prophecy of Scripture is of self-interpretation, but is only to be explained by other prophecies and the fulfilment ; for if every prophecy is in itself unintelligible, no combination of them can become intelligible, and the Prophetic Word would reveal nothing. *Knowing this first*, etc. The evidences for the fact that the Scriptures contain a revelation from God, written by inspired men, are abundant and various ; and are generally designated as external, internal, collateral or miscellaneous, and experimental. But it is of the first or greatest importance that we hold the Old Testament, as well as the New, to contain such a revelation ; for if men disregard the testimony of Christ and His apostles as to the one, how can they believe our Lord's promise and the apostolic testimony as to the other ? Accordingly we find such men at sea in thick mists, and at death "taking a leap in the dark."

21. B cop men from God, S vg holy men of God. To be appointed and sent by God as a prophet, and to be consecrated to that office, are the same. Cf. Gal. 1 : 1, and Jno. 1 : 6, Gr.

CHAPTER II.

THIS chapter contains a Prophecy concerning False Teachers. It is a portrait gallery of heretics, delineating their general features, from the apostolic age down to the day of judgment. And the painter is no common man, but a holy man of God and a legate of Christ, borne along by the Holy Ghost.

I. The rise and continuance, the characteristics, success, and doom of the false teachers, with that of their disciples and imitators, foretold, 1-3.

II. The absolute certainty of their punishment ; which is proved and illustrated from former signal examples of God's retributive justice ; and the absolute certainty of the deliverance of the righteous from a state of trial ; shown from former signal examples of God's distinguishing grace and mercy, 4-10.

III. The Apostle then gives a more particular description of the false teachers ; repeating, as he proceeds, the certainty of their punishment, and showing its justice, because of their abominable wickedness, 10-16.

IV. The awful nature and everlasting duration of their punishment foretold, and the justice of it illustrated, 17-22

¹ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. ² And many shall follow their pernicious ways ; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. ³ And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you : whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

This paragraph contains what may be called the text of the prophetic discourse, or that which is more copiously unfolded in the following context. And "He who touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire," in all this prophecy enables Peter to utter "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," flashing too, with holiness and truth. And as Isaiah, in the sixth chapter of his prophecy, utters a sad but truthful prediction concerning the ancient church, so does Peter of the church of this dispensation.

Lit. There were moreover false prophets among the people, as also among you there shall be false teachers, who privily shall bring in sects of destruction, and denying the Master who bought them, bringing on themselves speedy destruction.

Among the people, indirectly spoken of as having true prophets and the Prophetic Word, 1 : 19-21. (Cf. Lk. 2 : 10, "all the people," Gr. distinguished from "all the peoples," or Gentiles, vs. 31, 32.) *False prophets*, pretenders to inspiration, who utter falsehood in the name of Jehovah, or in the name of lying vanities called gods. Deut. 18 : 20-22 ; Jer. 23 : 1-32. *False teachers* are teachers of falsehood, who pervert the Gospel of God, whether pretending to inspiration or not. Cf. 1 Tim. 4 : 2, 7 ; 1 Jno. 4 : 1 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 3, 4. *Among you—i.e.*, you Christians, as in 1 Pet. 4 : 12, Gr., or among you who have precious faith in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and who acknowledge God, and Jesus our Lord. 1 : 1, 2, with 2 : 20, 21. They are described as those *who privily shall bring in sects of destruction*. In ecclesiastical usage *heresy* means an obstinate rejection of a fundamental truth of divine revelation, once professed and maintained. But the Greek word in the N. T. means *sect, school, or party*. We refer to all the passages in which it occurs. Acts 5 : 17 ; 15 : 5 ; 24 : 5, 14 ; 26 : 5 ; 28 : 22 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 19 ; Gal. 5 : 20, and here. It primarily means choice (as is evident from the usage of the cognate verb, Phil. 1 : 22 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 13 ; Heb. 11 : 25), either the act of choosing, or the thing chosen ; hence it is = school,

sect, or party. Sects of *destruction*, or schools of *perdition* : it seems to be the genitive of the ultimate effect = schools or sects whose teachings lead to perdition, or destruction—*i.e.*, the utter wreck or moral ruin of men : *apoleia* = destruction, as in 3 : 7, 16 ; Mat. 7 : 13 ; Rom. 9 : 22 ; Phil. 1 : 28 ; 3 : 19 ; Heb. 10 : 39. So in Jno. 5 : 29, “a resurrection of *life*,” and “a resurrection of *judgment*,” is a resurrection the ultimate result of which is Life to the righteous, and Condemnation to the wicked. Or, if the expression be taken as the genitive of the characteristic quality, the sense is the same : Schools of *perdition*—*i.e.*, inseparably connected with destruction. Either way, the literal translation, *sects of destruction*, or *schools of perdition*, is better than destructive sects or pernicious schools ; for they are Sects or Schools in which not salvation, but perdition is taught. So the inspired Apostle boldly expresses it, and with the most benevolent intention. Cf. 3 : 17. They shall *privily* bring in sects of destruction ; or, *stealthily*, concealing with Satanic adroitness their real aims and motives : *bring in*—*i.e.*, into the church, or among those who profess and call themselves Christians. (Cf. Gal. 2 : 4 ; Jude, ver. 4.) But no school of theology, no sect or party professing to be Christians, can be smuggled in, or surreptitiously introduced into any part of the church universal, except it be built on some distinguishing doctrine or dogmas. Accordingly Peter adds in further explanation : who stealthily shall bring in schools of perdition, *and by denying the Master who bought them* (denying that He who bought them is Master, or, denying as Master Him who bought them), *bringing on themselves speedy perdition*.

Their leading or principal error : It consists in denying the Master who bought them. They once professed to receive Christ both as Saviour or Redeemer and as Lord. 2 : 20, 21 ; cf. 1 : 9. According to their own acknowledgment, Christ bought or redeemed them ; but they shall stealthily bring in sects of destruction, and that by denying that their professed Redeemer is *Master*—*i.e.*, their Adonai,

Supreme Ruler and Lord. Gr. *despotes*, as in Jude, ver. 4, "Denying our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ : " which shows how Jude understood the words before us. The word is applied to the Father, Lk. 2 : 29 ; Acts 4 : 24 ; Rev. 6 : 10, but here to the incarnate Son, for He only bought or redeemed men by His blood. Cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 18, 19 ; 2 : 24 ; Gal. 3 : 13. When applied to men, it means the master of a house or family, as in 1 Pet. 2 : 18, and the church is Christ's house, Heb. 3 : 6. They will still acknowledge Christ as a deliverer from evil, but, by words and deeds, deny that He is their Supreme Ruler : while praising Him as a deliverer from evil, they will refuse to acknowledge or obey Him as the Master. *Bringing on themselves* (as a crushing stone) by this denial *speedy destruction* ; swift in coming and sudden in execution. Cf. 1 : 14, Gr. So that their error is not innocent, but fatal. *Denying*, etc., *bringing on themselves*, etc. (Apposition by asyndeton) ; the denial being the proximate cause of their moral ruin.

False teachers will be speedily under punishment as to their disembodied spirits in Tartarus, and it will be but a short time before our Lord comes to sentence them in their complete nature ; short, when compared with the dark starless night of eternity, in which teachers of known falsehood must stumble, grope, and rage, vs. 9, 17. It will also overtake them at the most unexpected moment : "when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them." 1 Thes. 5 : 2, 3. But this moral ruin is the very thing which it is foretold the false teachers will deny, as is assumed in vs. 4-10 : freedom from the blackness of darkness forever, is the very thing they promise to their followers, vs. 17, 19. And if the Redeemer is not the Supreme Lord, where can be the sin of disobeying Him ? And so by denying Him to be the Master, they of necessity deny His divine power and coming as judge of the wicked. (See 1 Cor. 16 : 22.)

The ancient Gnostics denied Christ as the Supreme

Lord ; they made him but an æon, or an emanation from God's fulness ; a sort of angel, only seemingly incarnate : hence often called Docetæ. They denied His pre-existence as the Eternal Word, co-equal with the Father, as well as His incarnation : in their view He was not God manifested in flesh ; and they would not, and did not, own and obey Him as Adonai, or Master. And the redemption they talked of was but a dream of a depraved imagination. (The English reader by perusing Irenæus and Hippolytus, in " the Ante-Nicene Christian Library," can see for himself what these Gnostics, self-styled knowing ones or scientists, dared to think and say.) And these false teachers appeared in swarms during the second century.

The Arians, who were very numerous in the fourth century, denied the Supreme Godhead of Christ, and supposed Him to be the highest and first created of intelligent beings in a sort of human body ; which may be called a modified revival of the Gnostic heresy. They made Him a sort of demi-god and demi-man, partaking of the essential qualities of neither God nor man, and so revered a creature existing only in their own imagination. They did not, however, any more than the Gnostics, consider Him a Supreme Ruler or Lord.

The Humanitarians, ancient and modern, whether called Ebionites, Socinians, Unitarians, or by any other name, hold Christ to be a mere man ; the greatest of teachers, but not Supreme Master or Lord. If they are Christians, then Mahomet and his followers must be so considered.

The Universalists, strictly so-called, contend that all men are saved at death, or that there is no everlasting punishment for the wicked ; that the only hell consists in remorse and the miseries of the present life. The Restorationists suppose that all, after being punished for an indefinite period after death, will at length be restored to holiness and happiness. And the Papists have followed Plato in imagining that there is a purgatory, or hospital for the curable,

in the world of spirits, and that these will become holy through the sharp pains and agonies there endured. Common to the two last named are the assumptions that there is such a hospital, and that punishment naturally tends to produce love to God. But human conjecture cannot prove the truth of the former assumption, and experience militates against the latter.

The Annihilationists hold that the impenitent and disobedient will, at death or at the judgment of the great day, be annihilated, literally reduced to nothing, or utterly blotted out of being.

So false teachers promise their followers freedom, freedom or exemption from the blackness of eternal darkness. So they impeach the veracity of Christ the Lord, or deny what He has taught by His prophets and apostles.

It is important to add that they who are orthodox in lip and creed, but heterodox in life, practically deny the Master who bought them. Mat. 7 : 21-23.

From this brief statement, it clearly appears that the prediction before us has been abundantly fulfilled, and is still fulfilling.

And it is also predicted that these false teachers shall continue in the church until the Master hath come ; for they are to be in the Christian Church as the false prophets were in the ancient. And it is well known that false prophets appeared during the whole Mosaic dispensation, or until the first advent, and so shall it be as to false teachers during the whole of this dispensation, or until the second advent. (This was seen and noticed by Calvin.) Cf. 2 Thes. 2 : 3-12 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 1, etc. ; 2 Tim. 3 : 1-9 ; Rev. 19 : 20. It is likewise intimated that true teachers shall exist along with the false, as was the case with the prophets of the former economy.

The prediction, then, is as follows : 1. False teachers shall arise and continue in the church up to the day of Christ's appearing. 2. They will be hypocritical and dangerous sect-promoters, or craftily introduce schools of perdition 3.

Their leading error, or great characteristic tenet, will be a denial that the Redeemer is the Supreme Lord, and, by consequence, the judge and punisher of the unbelieving and disobedient. 4. By this denial they will bring upon themselves speedy destruction, or be the authors of their own eternal misery.

And many shall follow their lasciviousnesses (according to the reading now generally received ; see margin of Eng. Vers.)—*i.e.*, their licentious ways, or wanton modes of living : lit. *follow out*, in our idiom, follow out and out, or thoroughly imitate their guides : *by reason of whom*—*i.e.*, the false teachers and their followers, *the way of the Truth shall be evil spoken of*, or blasphemed ; the Christian religion, or the Gospel of Christ, which alone contains the truth as to the way of salvation shall be irreverently calumniated. See Acts 19 : 9 ; 9 : 2. *The way of the truth*, considered as the rule of faith, as *the way of righteousness*, is the Gospel or divine revelation as the rule of duty, ver. 21.

Of the false teachers who agree in denying that the Redeemer is Lord, some will be lascivious, others avaricious, others insolent anarchists (ver. 10). And it cannot be intelligently disputed that they who deny the Supreme Godhead of Christ, reject with scorn His vicarious sacrifice, and blot hell out of their creed, or make it a hospital or reformatory, throw the reins on the neck of human lusts, and foster the worst passions and appetites of mankind. It is whispering in the ear the sermon of the old serpent, "Ye shall not surely die."

Jude records the speedy fulfilment of Peter's prophecy, even at the close of the first century, ver. 4. Cf. 2 Tim. 6 : 20, 21 ; Rev. 2 : 6, 14, 15. And it is well known that the Antinomian Gnostics of the Ante-Nicene age of the church were exceedingly lascivious. And so it has been with many until now ; the Mormons, the so-called Spiritualists and free-lovers being conspicuous examples. The bishops of Rome, too, by forbidding the clergy to marry, and making auricular confession a law, have certainly coun-

tenanced lasciviousness, and that not ignorantly. Indeed, no matter how absurd and monstrous the doctrine taught, the followers are many.

The profligacy of the false teachers and their followers, especially in the second century, caused the pagans to calumniate the Christian religion, and gave occasion to the circulation of the most outrageous stories respecting the true and false disciples of Christ indiscriminately ; the evidences of which abound in the pages of the early Apologists, as Athenagoras, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian. (Cf. Irenæus 1, 25, 3.) The shameless licentiousness of the Papal clergy at the time of the Reformation and before, is also indisputable, by reason of whom the way of the Truth has been blasphemed. And what as to lasciviousness is the state of the clergy and people, where the Papal religion reigns without a rival ?

And in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you : for whom the judgment from of old lingereth not, and their destruction slumbereth not.

Others will be wholly under the influence of avarice, mingled with hypocrisy. *In covetousness*, immersed in it, living and moving in it as in their natural element : or, in consequence of it, through it as the proximate cause, as in the Eng. Vers. Cf. Acts 7 : 29, Gr. Either way, the sense is the same, but we prefer the former mode of explanation. *With feigned words*, words made to deceive the unwary and unestablished, ver. 14. Lit. *with moulded words*, words put in the mould of their own invention, and made to suit their purposes, as the potter fashions the clay to suit his. Cf. Rom. 9 : 20, Gr. Hence the sense is, With fictitious stories and self-contrived doctrines, false in themselves, but hypocritically commended as true. *Shall they make merchandise of you*, act in reference to you for mercenary purposes ; buy and sell you like a bale of goods. (Cf. Jas. 4 : 13, where it is used absolutely, and rendered " buy and sell," and Sept. Ezek. 27 : 21, with the acc. of the person, as here.) Or, they will buy and sell you as worthless slaves :

they will care no more for your souls than slave-dealers do for the bodies of men. (See Ezek. 27 : 13 ; Heb.) Calvin : *Fictos sermones vocat, arte compositos ad fallendum. . . . Hoc maxime odiosum est, nos tanquam vilia mancipia venum exponi.*

Soon did this prediction begin to be fulfilled ; for in the second century apocryphal gospels and revelations, or fictitious stories and visions were published ; such as the so-called " Gospel according to Peter," " The Preaching and Revelation of Peter." (Eus. E. H. 3 : 3.) " The Shepherd of Hermas," and others of a similar character, and many novels called Lives of the Saints, of later ages, containing, among other things, self-contrived doctrines or tenets wholly contrary to Scripture. And in the fourth and fifth centuries appeared the so-called " Apostolical Constitutions and Canons," pretending to be written by the apostles themselves. And it is hardly too much to say that the chief errors now fashionable had their schools of destruction in full operation, assaulting the true teachers during the Ante-Nicene age of the church. (See Hagenbach's History of Doctrines.) And the dogma concerning Purgatory, although of Platonic origin, was in process of formation in the time of Augustine ; and universal salvation or restoration, although in a quasi-Hindoo or Pythagorean form, was taught by Origen in the third century. And soon the leading prelates of the church began to hold that the Scriptures were chiefly designed for the clergy, and dangerous for the unlearned to read : also, that we should invoke for help the saints and martyrs in heaven. And who has not heard of the Papal indulgences, of their masses for the living and the dead, provided the Rev. the Clergy are well paid for it ? He must be near-sighted indeed who supposes the successors of Judas Iscariot and Simon Magus to be extinct.

And what must be said of those who, from avaricious motives proclaim even orthodox doctrines ? So far as such teachers themselves are concerned, are not all their words feigned or hypocritical ?

For whom (dative of reference) ; or *Against whom* (dative of disadvantage, which seems preferable)—*i.e.*, the false teachers, and especially those just named ; or all who deny that the Redeemer is Lord, but especially the lascivious and avaricious hypocrites, with their followers. *The judgment from of old* (from the most ancient times, as in 3 : 5), the sentence pronounced by God from the earliest ages, His decision as judge against the incorrigible, *lingereth not*, comes not “with lingering steps and slow,” as an idler walks : *ouk argei*. Cf. *argos*, 1 : 8 ; cf. Jude, ver. 4. *And their destruction* (or perdition) *slumbereth not* : so rapidly is Destruction advancing against them that it does not stop even to slumber. Swift is the step of the Almighty Judge towards them, and wide-awake is the eye of His justice. These original and peculiar expressions are personifications. Cf. 3 : 7-9, with 2 : 9, 10.

1. *Denying their Redeemer as Master* : our view as to the extent of the atonement is stated in the notes on 1 Jno. 2 : 2. 2. A B C K L S the versions generally lasciviousnesses, *aselgeiais*. 3. *The judgment from of old* : Estius. Ab æterno destinata, et in Scripturis prædicta.

‘For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.

The certainty of the speedy punishment of the false teachers and their followers, and of the deliverance of the godly from a state of trial, historically proved and illustrated, vs. 4-10. And the argument is based on an immovable foundation, the immutability of God ; on the clearly revealed fact that He is as unchangeable in His knowledge, truth, power, and justice, as in His grace and mercy, or in any other perfection of His nature. And so of the Theanthropos our Master, as well as Redeemer, in and by whom God is to judge mankind. Acts 10 : 42 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 5 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 9. “He cannot deny Himself,” or act inconsistently with any perfection of His nature, being “the Same

yesterday, to-day, and forever." See 2 Tim. 2 : 11-13 ; Heb. 13 : 8.

The protasis is contained in vs. 4-7 (ver. 8 being an explanatory parenthesis), the apodosis in vs. 9, 10, concluding with the words "despise dominion." If God dealt so with angels, with the Antediluvians, and the Cities of the Plain, then He knows how to punish the incorrigible, since He changeth not : if He delivered the righteous then, He will do the same when our Lord hath come.

Against whom the judgment from of old lingereth not, and their perdition slumbereth not. *For if God spared not angels that sinned, but with chains of blackness cast them into Tartarus, and delivered them up, being kept for judgment.*

The first signal example of God's retributive justice : "It is an argument from the greater to the less." If angels, originally superior to men, were punished when they sinned, and are kept for judgment, how can men who persist in sinning expect to escape the judgment of God? Peter throws aside curious questions, and as a legate of Christ directs our attention to the inseparable connection between their sin and the punishment thereof, present and future. (Cf. notes on Jude, ver. 6.)

God *spared not* : He took in His hand the rod of His justice, and in using it spared them not. The metaphor denotes that He manifested to them His power and justice pure, or unmixed with mercy. Cf. Rom. 8 : 32 ; 11 : 21 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 2 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 5. *With chains of blackness*, the blackness peculiar to Tartarus, as in ver. 17 ; Jude, ver. 6. Bound with the chains or cords of blackness, by a metaphor for the most confirmed evil disposition and habits. Cf. Prov. 5 : 22. *Hurled them into Tartarus* : with chains of blackness cast them into the place of blackness. Tartarus here is the same as "prison," 1 Pet. 3 : 19. ("The prison," says Plutarch, "which they call Tartarus.") It is their present place of torment. *And delivered them up*, gave them over as criminals to the proper officers, *being kept (or reserved) for judgment*—i.e., for their trial and condem-

nation at the Great Day : ver. 9 ; Jude 6. The present participle is used because the custody for judgment is uninterrupted. Accordingly, the sense is : When angels sinned, God treated them with unmixed justice, laid hold of them just as they were, and cast them with their confirmed sinful disposition and habits into a doleful place of punishment, where they are like criminals under constant guard, or kept for judgment.

While thus kept, the recollection of past offences, and the fearful anticipation of the judgment to come, Mat. 8 : 29, only tighten their chains, or cause their evil disposition to rage with greater fury ; remorse and despair being the hell within, and Tartarus the hell without. Wherever they are or go, they carry their chains with them. (Calvin on Jude.)

They who suppose that punishment has a tendency to sanctify sinners, or that remorse and despair are medicines which will cure the love of sinning, should recollect what the lost angels have suffered, are still suffering, and what they dread when Christ the Lord hath come. And yet these sufferings for thousands of years have not cured them of the love of sinning. They are more incorrigible now than ever before, still persisting in their rebellion. 1 Jno. 3 : 8. See Gal. 6 : 7, 8 ; Eph. 5 : 6.

The first example of God's retributive justice proves that no official station or high mental endowments will at all avail as a plea for false teachers and their followers at the bar of Christ, the Master and Lord.

Lit. *Angels having sinned* = that sinned, or when they sinned ; implying that others, " the elect angels " did not. As to the nature of their sin, and the mode they manifested it, see notes on Jude. But how could such holy and exalted beings as the angels sin ? How can sinful desires and volitions arise in minds created holy or sinless ? We answer (1.) that the question, Whence the Evil ? is beyond the reach of the human intellect. On waxen wings we cannot reach the sun. (2.) A solution as to the angels proposed by some as possible or probable : It occurred by concentrating their attention for a time on their own intellectual and moral endowments, and so becoming lovers of or delighters in themselves, and forgetters of God. But still the question returns, How

could beings created holy do so? The truth is that it cannot be fully explained in this world by men of the keenest intellect. Whether it will be in the world to come, and whether we could understand it if then revealed—remains to be seen. (3.) We believe that some of the angels sinned, still persist in sinning, are bound with the chains of blackness, and kept for judgment, because it is clearly though incidentally revealed. "And if we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater." (4.) If we will believe no fact because we may not be able to understand perfectly how or why it occurred, then our creed must be equally foolish and contracted—viz., I believe in—nothing. (Cf. notes on Jas. 1 : 13-17.) (5.) The proper question is not, Why did God permit it to take place ; or, How could sin spring up in the minds of angels and of men ? but How can we be delivered from the evil ? And this Revealed theology alone unfolds. (6.) The systems or theories devised to account for physical and moral evil are decided failures ; such as Gnosticism, Dualism, Pantheism, and the Origenistic-Platonic hypothesis of the pre-existence of human souls in other worlds and sinning there when not in bodies ; failures, because as hypotheses they do not account for the stubborn facts, and some of them are wild and blasphemous ravings. Neither are those theories which assume that sin and misery are the inevitable result of creatural imperfection, and of man's complex constitution at all satisfactory, since they indirectly make God the author of sin, contrary to the testimony of Scripture, reason, and conscience. (See Hodge's Systematic Theology, Part II., ch. VIII.) (7.) The Holy Scriptures, as already suggested, are not designed to teach us why God did not prevent the introduction of sin into angelic or human minds, or how that was possible ; but, assuming the fall of angels as an indisputable fact, to show the manner in which sin entered into our world, and the mode of Redemption—e.g., Gen. 3 ; Rom. 5. (8.) This, the great difficulty of theology, presses on all who believe in the existence of God and His moral government, not on Christians alone. In fact, it belongs to Natural Theology, which presents to the eye of reason no mode of deliverance. It is Irrationalism, therefore, to reject the Scriptures which set forth a way of redemption equally honorable to God and beneficial to man.

With chains (dative of manner) *of blackness cast them into Tartarus, and delivered them up being kept for judgment* : not, delivered them up into chains of darkness ; which needlessly disregards the order of the original, in which also the participle is in the accusative, and the dative is implied, as in Acts 3 : 13. To deliver them up to chains, is a harsh and unusual form of speech, but to deliver them up to persons, to officers or ministers of justice, is a natural and common expression. The first clause shows the manner in which they were cast into their pres-

ent place of punishment ; the second, those (by implication) to whom they were delivered up and for what purpose. To take the present participle as equivalent to the future one is inadmissible, for the participle designates the persons kept, and *unto* or *for judgment* the end for which they are kept.

B C K L being kept for judgment : K L Thph Oec with chains of blackness, *seirais zophon*, as c. t., and so Hippolytus, as cited in the Introduction ; A *seirois zophois*, in black pits ; B *seirois zophon*, in pits (dens) of blackness, and so S, with a change in the spelling, *sirois zophon*. According to this reading, *dens of blackness* (dative locative = in dens of blackness) is a further description of what is meant by *casting into Tartarus* ; a word used by no other N. T. writer. So understood, their present place of punishment would alone be designated. But the former reading is genuine, since Jude explains *seirais* by *desmois* = bonds, and *tartaros* by *hupo zophon* = under blackness. To keep being punished, in A S, is found in the ninth verse, *kolazomenous terein* ; but here *teroumenous*, being kept, is undoubtedly genuine.

Delivered them up, or gave them over, *being kept* (or watched) *for judgment*. With no desire to indulge in curious questions, we may, since the text naturally suggests it, propose the following : To whom were they delivered up ? Whose duty is it to keep them within their appointed bounds until and for the judgment of the great day ? Most probably, the ministers of God's justice in this matter are the angels that have never sinned. For, in Rev. 20 : 1-3, which is a prophetic vision of their perfect imprisonment during the thousand years, Satan stands as the symbol or representative of himself and the other fallen angels ; and the angel that seizes, binds, and imprisons Satan is the symbol or representative of himself and the other unfallen angels. Now these angels " excel in strength," are " greater in power and might" than those who have fallen, and there is no absurdity in supposing that God commissioned the holy angels as His ministers to keep watch over the fallen angels from the time of their fall until now ; or that it will be the duty of the elect angels to do so until the day arrives for the public trial and condemnation of those that sinned and persist in sinning.

Cast into Tartarus : some suppose that the dark cloudy atmosphere is their Tartarus, or present place of punishment : it seems to be the place where their prince assembles his forces. Eph. 2 : 2. Others, that it is an abyss or deep pit in the earth. Lk. 8 : 31. Wherever it is, it is certain that many of the demons or fallen angels are as yet prisoners at large, or roaming over the earth, as is abundantly evident from the Gospel narratives : cf. 1 Pet. 5 : 8 ; Job. 1 : 7, kept, however, in their assigned limits by the holy angels, and for the purpose stated by the prophet-apostle.

(1.) Their present place of punishment is here called Tartarus. (2.) The'r prison during the millennium is called the abyss. (3.) After the millennium, it is described by the symbol of a lake of fire and brimstone. By this awful picture the place of their final and everlasting punishment is denoted ; also that of the incorrigible of mankind, after the second resurrection. Rev. 20 : 10-15 ; Mat. 25 : 41, 46. (The abyss spoken of by the demons, Lk. 8 : 31, seems to be the same as the prison here called Tartarus.) (4.) At the beginning of the millennium, the place into which the beast and the false prophet, and both alive, were cast, is denoted by the same symbol. Rev. 19 : 20. But the fallen angels are not thrown into it until the thousand years are past. Rev. 20 : 7, 10.

These things are revealed, not to tell us where the prisons are, but to warn us concerning the wrath to come ; foretelling its awful nature and everlasting duration. Cf. Rev. 14 : 9-11 ; 21 : 8.

⁶ And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly ; ⁶ and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly ; ⁷ and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked : ⁸ (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds ;) ⁹ the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished : ¹⁰ but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government (inarg. or, dominion).

The second and third signal examples of God's retributive justice, with similar examples of His distinguishing grace and mercy.

And spared not the old world, but guarded Noah, one of eight, a preacher of righteousness, when he brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly.

The old world is the world before the flood, or the earth as it was from the creation to the deluge, 3 : 5, 6 ; but it is here used by metonymy for its inhabitants, as is evident from the fact that it is the opposite of " Noah one of eight," and is further described as the world of *the ungodly* ; all the sins of the Antediluvians being thus traced up to their prox-

imate internal cause—to wit, ungodliness or a disregard of God and His law, the fruitful source of the most presumptuous transgressions. Cf. Ps. 14.

They were corrupt before God, most probably idolaters. Cf. Gen. 6 : 11, with Ex. 32 : 7, 8 ; Jude 2 : 19. “The wickedness of man was great in the earth,” etc., but violence and lasciviousness were everywhere and constantly conspicuous ; even the professed sons of God abandoning themselves to the sin last named. Gen. 6 ; cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 2. And we should recollect that our Lord Himself foretells a like state of things before and up to the time of His appearing. Lk. 17 : 27-30 ; 18 : 1-8.

God *spared not the old world* : He punished them severely ; (1) destroying their bodies by the flood, (2) putting their spirits in prison or in Tartarus, 1 Pet. 3 : 19, 20, keeping them as ungodly and unrighteous under punishment, and that (3) for the day of judgment, ver. 9. Their case is hopeless.

But He guarded Noah, one of eight ; flung over him the shield of His almighty love ; kept him and his family safely in the ark. Gen. 7 : 16. Noah was *a preacher of righteousness*. For one hundred and twenty years, while building the ark, he had many opportunities to remind multitudes of that which was right for them to do in consequence of their relations and obligations to the Most High ; also, of that which was right for God to do, if they continued in unbelief and open rebellion. Noah also preached the righteousness which is according to faith (in its relation to faith), Heb. 11 : 7, Gr. ; his preaching of it being based on the revelation concerning the seed of the woman who is to bruise the serpent’s head, Gen. 3 : 15, and on the divinely instituted sacrifices, which were types or pictures showing how sins could be forgiven—namely, when imputed to and borne by Him as our substitute. But they heeded not ; called their inspired teacher and reprover a fanatic and a fool, and died in their sins, are now under punishment, and kept for future condemnation in their complete nature at the great day.

Though hand join in hand, all the world over, still the wicked shall not go unpunished. Majorities are nothing to God, and, as the world still is, public opinion and fashion are bibles of no value. One Noah, in the judgment of God, is worth more than the whole world of the ungodly.

The multitudes that follow false teachers, and who are the mere passive recipients of whatever is taught, or who with itching ears, according to their own sinful desires, heap to themselves such teachers, eagerly embracing fables, and turning away their ears from the truth, must not expect exemption from punishment when our Lord hath come. The Truth alone tends to godliness ; and it is but too evident that a religion may be popular or fashionable, and a theology be called scientific, when neither is Biblical. 2 Tim. 4 : 3, 4 ; Tit. 1 : 1. There are among those who call themselves Christians not only schools of salvation, but also schools of destruction. Take heed *what* and *how* ye hear, said the Master Himself. Mk. 4 : 24 ; Lk. 8 : 18.

And burning to ashes the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, with an overthrow condemned *them*, having made *them* an example of those that will live ungodly ; and *yet* righteous Lot, worn down by the lascivious walk of the lawless, he snatched away : (for by seeing and hearing that righteous man, while dwelling among them, day after day his righteous soul with their unlawful deeds tormented).

With an overthrow, or, *by the overthrow*, dative of manner (or, *to an overthrow*, the dative of punishment, as in Mk. 10 : 33) ; *condemned* their inhabitants : the dreadful manner in which God destroyed their bodies was a proof of the condemnation of their souls to Tartarus, the prison of the lost. Cf. 1 Pet. 3 : 19 ; Jude, ver. 7. *To condemn* is the same as *not to spare* in the preceding verses. *Having made* them, or, *having placed* them, *an example*, symbol or picture, *of those that will live ungodly*, of the sudden and remediless doom of those who are determined to disregard God, and act as their own passions dictate, vs. 9, 10.

The vale of Siddim, in which these cities were built, was in beauty and fertility as the garden of the Lord. But though the country was like Eden, the inhabitants were exceedingly depraved. Gen. 13. Moses describes them as perfectly lawless and shameless, and as given in mass to the most abominable and unnatural lewdness. Gen. 19; cf. Ezek. 16 : 49, 50. But here their monstrous transgressions are again traced up to their proximate cause, ungodliness, and their determination to persist in it.

Having made, set, or placed them—i.e., by their dreadful and perpetual overthrow, and by exhibiting it in His word, as an example of the punishment of the pre-eminently ungodly at the great day. Cf. Gen. 19 : 24, 25 with Ps. 11 : 6; 97 : 3; Isa. 30 : 33; 66 : 15, 16, 24; Mal. 4 : 1; 2 Pet. 3 : 7. And it seems certain that there is an allusion to the overthrow of these cities in the symbol of a lake burning with fire and brimstone. Rev. 14 : 10; 19 : 20; 20 : 19; 21 : 8.

And yet it was no blind, indiscriminate wrath, since God *snatched away*, or with the gentle violence of love *rescued*, the only righteous man among them. (Cf. Gen. 19 : 16.)

Lit. *the walk of the lawless in lasciviousness*: it was like a path in which they constantly walked; their whole way of thinking, speaking, and acting consisting in lasciviousness. *Worn down* (a metaphor derived from the bodily exhaustion resulting from hard and unrequited labor. Acts 7 : 24)=heart-broken, sick at heart, or exceedingly grieved because of the vanity of his efforts to reclaim the lawless.

Lot was truly righteous, for while dwelling among them and observing their filthy deeds, and hearing what their unclean lips uttered, he daily *tormented* his righteous soul: another striking metaphor. Seeing and hearing were like instruments by which he tormented his soul, in love with righteousness. He hated sin, and the more its ugly forms appeared, the sadder he became. See Ps. 119 : 53; 158. By calling them *lawless*, and their deeds *unlawful*, Peter takes it for granted that they had a law, although they hab-

itually trampled it under foot ; not only that engraven on the conscience (Rom. 2 : 14, 15), but also the revelations then proclaimed by inspired men, of which Lot must on various occasions have informed them ; thus giving point and authority to his admonitions. (Gen. 19 : 9.)

Most say that Lot was unwise and sinful in selecting Sodom as his residence. Be that as it may, it is certain that Christ's prophet-apostle commends his behavior while he dwelt in it. His happiness indeed among such a filthy gang was terribly wrenched, but not his love of righteousness. And pray, what would become of towns and cities, if the righteous did not dwell among the lawless, and by word and deed reprove their gigantic wickedness ? Must not Satan be attacked where his principal armies and fortresses are ? And who is to do it, if not the trained bands, the veterans of Christ ?

The conclusion of the preceding prediction and argument expressly stated : Their judgment and perdition cometh swiftly ; for if God spared not angels, etc., then *the Lord knoweth how to rescue* (snatch away) *the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment* (lit. being punished) *for the day of judgment ; but chiefly* (he knoweth how to keep under punishment for the day of judgment) *those that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise lordship.*

The apostle begins the protasis with showing the absolute certainty of the speedy punishment of the false teachers and their followers ; but as he proceeds with the historical illustrations of God's justice, he also introduces instances of His wonderful grace in the deliverance of the pious ; hence the apodosis relates to both the righteous and the wicked : a beautiful specimen of the manner in which the Spirit of Inspiration acts on the mind ; such a mind, even in a torrent of emotion, being borne along by the Spirit according to the natural laws of suggestion or association.

The Lord—i.e., God in the person of our Lord, the The-

anthropic Messiah ; the very one whom they deny as Master. Ver. 4 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 5, 7 ; Acts 10 : 42 ; 17 : 31 ; Jno. 5 : 22, 27-29. The Lord *knoweth how to rescue and to keep* ; His knowledge and power are as infinite as His justice. He who is omniscient cannot possibly be mistaken in selecting the right persons, the proper objects of mercy and justice at the great day. He knoweth every one of the righteous and every one of the wicked, and that in an absolutely perfect manner ; all their thoughts, words, and actions. Rev. 2 : 23. He also is "able to save and to destroy." And since "in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Col. 2 : 9 ; Gen. 19 : 25. He will show His justice in the most convincing manner by the degrees of punishment to be inflicted ; *but chiefly those*, etc.

The day of judgment is the day when Christ shall reign in righteousness and punish with justice, embracing the whole period denoted by the thousand years. See notes on 1 Pet. 4 : 5 ; cf. 2 Thes. 1 : 6-10. (Paul often calls it, with special reference to believers, the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Day of the Lord Jesus, the Day of Christ. 1 Cor. 1 : 8 ; 5 : 5 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 14 ; Phil. 1 : 6, 10 ; 2 : 16.)

To rescue the godly out of temptation, is to deliver them by His almighty power from that condition and those circumstances in which their fidelity to Him is constantly tested. When false teachers appear, and their followers are many, the godly have abundant opportunities to manifest their hatred of deadly errors and abominable sins. They thus prove in the clearest manner, to men, angels, and demons, that they indeed love God and Christ, and that they esteem His Word as the only infallible rule of faith and duty. Deut. 13 : 1-3. But this state of trial to the pious on earth is to continue only until the day of judgment, when their Lord will deliver them from it completely and forever. Cf. Jas. 1 : 12 ; Mat. 13 : 40-43.

To keep the unrighteous under punishment, designates their state as disembodied spirits in Tartarus, and the impossibil-

ity of their escape from that prison of the lost. To keep them thus *for the day of judgment*, is to keep them in a state of punishment as disembodied for the time of their public trial and condemnation in their complete nature, when the Master hath come. They *walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness* who take their bodily appetites as their leader or guide, and who are wholly under the influence of abominable lust. They *despise lordship*, government, or dominion, who treat with contempt any and every form of government that forbids the indulgence of their polluting passions. Cf. Jude vs. 7, 8. Of such it must be emphatically said, Whose condemnation is certain and just. Cf. Eph. 5 : 3-6 ; 1 Cor. 6 : 9, 10.

Christ's prophet-apostle is speaking of the certainty of the punishment of those who persist in known error and sin ; not of those that repent and turn to God and Christ, to truth and holiness ; cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 9 ; Eph. 5 : 7, 8 ; 1 Cor. 6 : 11 ; and only of adults, or those of the age of discretion, for they alone are capable of distinguishing between truth and error, right and wrong. (Notes on 1 Pet. 3 : 19, 20.)

The spirit of lawlessness is increasing in the earth, even in those who have the Bible in their hands, or to whom it is accessible. These despisers of dominion are attempting to destroy the family by reviling the sanctity of marriage ; the church, by their efforts to abolish the Sabbath, and by blaspheming the Oracles of God ; the state, by a so-called socialism or communism ; or by secret plots to disorganize existing governments in favor of a single class in the community—themselves. Lasciviousness is also increasing ; hence self-abuse with many who are not found in the dens or gilded palaces of harlots. And fornication, with its frequent consequent infanticide, adultery, and other defilements. But it is only in lawful wedlock that the bed is undefiled, and it is beyond a doubt that the lewd shall be especially punished. Heb. 13 : 4. The nature of these sins is not altered

by giving them different names ; calling the one communism, and the other social natural pleasures. And the Lord Christ cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked.

6. A S vg overthrow ; B C cop omit. *Of them that will live ungodly; mello* with the infinitive is used to indicate intention, the volition with respect to one's course in the near future : cf. Lk. 10 : 1 ; Acts 20 : 13 ; here with *asebein* ; a virtual determination with every returning day to live ungodly.

9. S cop temptations, B vg temptation. *Kolazomenous* is the present participle passive = being punished ; and it is ungrammatical to imagine that it is used for the future participle ; and needless, for the full phrase is, To keep the unrighteous being punished *for judgment*.

10. In the lust of *uncleanness* : Gr. *miasmos* = defilement or pollution : ver. 20, *misama*. A B vg as c.t. lust, S lusts.

¹⁰ Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. ¹¹ Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them (marg. Some read, *against themselves*) before the Lord. ¹² But these, as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not ; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption ; ¹³ and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time*. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you ; ¹⁴ having eyes full of adultery (Gr. *an adulteress*), and that cannot cease from sin ; beguiling unstable souls : an heart they have exercised with covetous practices ; cursed children : ¹⁵ which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son of Bosor*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness ; ¹⁶ but was rebuked for his iniquity : the dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet.

A more particular description of the false teachers, in which the certainty of their punishment is again predicted, and the justice of it illustrated by reason of their abominable sins.

The use of the present tense in most of the paragraph need create no difficulty. 1. Some say that it is the pro-

phetic present ; the prophet-apostle describing the false teachers as if moving and speaking before his illuminated vision, or presented to his mind's eye by the Spirit of Inspiration. 2. Others suppose that he employs the present tense because some such teachers had already appeared in the church. Vs. 20-22. 3. Nothing is more common than to use the present tense in a description of the qualities of a thing, or in a delineation of human character. How then could the apostle have better portrayed some of the prominent characteristics of the heretics ?

In vs. 1-3 the future tense prevails, in 4-7 the past, and here the present, and in each case with perfect accuracy and propriety. In vs. 12, 13, the future "they shall perish, receiving," etc.

While describing the characteristics of the false teachers, predicting their doom, and illustrating its justice, the apostle at the same time expresses his holy dislike of their sins by a torrent of participial phrases and sentences, in the interpretation of which the chief difficulty lies. For while it is well known that participles are used to indicate the circumstances (preceding, accompanying, and subsequent) of an action, such as time, cause, manner, and condition ; still it is not easy here to state and explain rightly the connection of the participial phrases and sentences. At the same time, the sins intended are described with the greatest perspicuity—namely, profane and insolent lawlessness, combined with ignorance of that which they revile ; luxury and "pious frauds ;" insatiable lasciviousness and avarice.

Lit. *daring men, self-willed, while speaking evil of* (blaspheming or irreverently calumniating) *glories, they tremble not—i.e., fool-hardy, over-bold men, who show what they call their courage at the expense of good sense and decency, bent on pleasing themselves ; obstinate malignants, reckless heroes in Satan's army. Although constantly reviling glories, they tremble not ; do not dread the consequences of their insolent and daring wickedness. Glories = glorious*

beings ; those invested with glory or honor : metonymy of the abstract for the concrete.

There are glorious or very honorable persons in the heavens and on earth ; glorious on account of their eminent knowledge and holiness, or on account of their high offices and stations, or because of both. See Eph. 3 : 10 ; 1 : 20, etc. ; 1 Pet. 2 : 11-17. And some of the false teachers (Antinomian libertines, ignorant, insolent anarchists), while reviling them all, have madly braved the awful penalties of God's most holy law. The fundamental principle of the Gnostics, for example, was that matter is the source of all evil. Accordingly, they could not, in consistency with that baseless assumption, ascribe the creation of the heavenly worlds, of our earth, or of embodied men, to the Most High. Hence they rejected the Old Testament as a revelation from God, and various portions of the New ; attributing to an angel or angels the framing or formation of the heavenly worlds, earth and man. What viler defamation of the office and employments of these glorious beings can be imagined ! What blasphemous insolence and nonsense to put them in the place of the Creator, and then affirm their work to be imperfect, and the original cause of sin ! (Considered, however, as a so-called philosophical explanation of the origin of created things, it is certainly as good as " the protoplasm," or " inscrutable force," of the Materialists, ancient and modern.)

Some of the Antinomian Gnostics, when led by their own nefarious lusts, traduced the angels of light by invoking them as the instigators and approvers of their polluting appetites ; as Irenæus testifies, I, 31. " They (the Cainites of the Gnostic school) also hold, like Carpocrates, that men cannot be saved until they have gone through all kinds of experience. An angel, they maintain, attends them in every one of their sinful and abominable actions, and urges them to venture on audacity and incur pollution. . . . And

they say, O thou angel, I use thy work ; O thou power, I accomplish thy operation ! And they maintain that this is perfect knowledge, without shrinking to rush into such actions as it is not lawful even to name."

Other false teachers have irreverently calumniated the true character and office of the holy angels by making them, as in the Platonian philosophy, mediators of intercession between God and men ; thus stealthily introducing into the church the worship of angels—not trembling at the apostolic caveat, Col. 2 : 18. They have also traduced departed saints in glory, by making them mediators of the same kind. In this way saint-worship and Mary-worship were privily brought into the church by those who falsely and arrogantly claim to be the only true disciples of Him who is the One Mediator between God and men. 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6.

The fanatical Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, while claiming to be inspired, took delight in reviling those clothed with the highest honors in the state ; and the bishops of Rome have for ages held that they are by divine right supreme in church and state, and hence they hesitate not to revile glories—except when they can mould them as clay to suit their own daring projects, or use them as ministers and co-workers to promote one great end of their towering ambition, which is " Empire by Religion."

Calvin confines the meaning of *glories* to magistrates supreme and subordinate, or those clothed with glory and honor on earth, considering it as an explanation of those by whom the *lordship* before mentioned is exercised. But although there is nothing in the word glories that can restrict it to earthly magistrates, yet the next verse shows that there is in it a special allusion to them.

Whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power, bring not against them before the Lord a reviling judgment.

The irreverent insolence of the false teachers is rebuked by contrasting it with the manner in which angels act in analogous cases. *Angels*, without a descriptive word or

phrase = the holy angels. *Who are, or, although they are. Greater in strength and power*, superior to others not expressly named in every kind of power, whether exerted for the protection or destruction of men, Heb. 1 : 14 ; Acts 12 : 23 ; and especially in intellectual strength and moral power or holiness ; heroes of God and of Christ. Ps. 103 : 20 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 7. Lit. *where*—i.e., “ in cases where,” or in like circumstances ; but since it is here used to introduce a refutation of a flagrant sin, it is best rendered by *whereas*, as in 1 Cor. 3 : 3. (Cf. Heb. 9 : 6 ; 10 : 18.) *Judgment* : either a mental decision, or a judicial one, most probably the latter ; *judgment*, the sentence of a judge, by metonymy for the *accusation* which occasions the sentence, or the matter to be judicially decided. Cf. Jude, ver. 9. *To bring* a judgment by a metaphor = to utter it in their language, openly declare or present it, 2 Jno. ver. 10 ; *near to* or *before the Lord*—i.e., when standing before the Lord Christ as reporters in the matter. *Reviling*, lit. a *blaspheming* judgment : they never express an opinion, or present an accusation against them before the Lord of that character. As reporters, they are in all respects reverent to Christ, and truthful in what they declare of them.

Greater in strength and power : to whom does the apostle allude by the adjective greater ? Interpreters answer thus : 1. Some say the fallen angels : Whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power than those that sinned, ver. 4, bring not against them before the Lord a reviling judgment. But although the fact assumed in this interpretation is true, it seems to us strained to suppose that the apostle alludes to them. It is more natural to suppose a reference to the nearer context, ver. 10. And this mode of explanation originates from a mistaken assumption that Jude, ver. 9, is a parallel passage. (See notes in loc.) 2. Others say the false teachers, evil-speakers or revilers, just spoken of : Whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power than these revilers (a holy cutting irony), bring not against them a slanderous accusation. Angels report the truth to the

Lord about these false and abominable teachers ; although these angels which excel in strength might speedily, if so directed, remove all false teachers and their followers from the earth. Cf. Mat. 13 : 39, etc.

“ Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.”

They are present in Christian assemblies, and must notice not only the behavior of professed disciples (1 Cor. 11 : 10), but also the instructions and actions of those who call themselves teachers of Christianity ; and there is no absurdity in assuming that they make a reverential, modest, and truthful report to our Lord concerning the teachers and the taught in the whole visible church. This mode of explanation is not only in itself probable, but it also agrees well with the near context. And the same may be said of the third interpretation. 3. Greater than the glories, dignities, or magistrates, before mentioned : Daring men, self-willed, while reviling glories, they tremble not. Whereas angels, who are greater than those who are clothed with glory and honor on earth, bring not against them a defamatory accusation. 4. What is to hinder us from supposing that the prophet-apostle alludes to both the revilers and the reviled ? So understood, the elliptical mode of expression is accounted for ; and this mode of explanation we prefer.

But these (they who despise dominion and rail at dignities, ver. 10), *as irrational sensual animals born for capture and destruction, reviling* (speaking evil, or blaspheming) *in things that they are ignorant of, in their own corruption shall perish, receiving the wages of unrighteousness.*

The certainty and justice of their moral ruin are shown from their ignorance of what they revile and from their gross moral corruption. “ These, reviling in things that they are ignorant of,” is the logical subject ; “ in their own corruption shall perish, receiving the wages of unrighteousness,” is the logical predicate ; and the simile illustrates the certainty and justice of their doom. *Sensual*, lit. *natural*—

i.e., guided by the nature which animals have, whose appetites and instincts are a law to them, since they are destitute of reason and conscience ; but when men put their passions at the helm, and do violence to the inner supreme law of their nature, they must wreck their well-being for time and eternity. *Destruction*, lit. *corruption*, *i.e.*, physical death, the only sort of corruption of which animals are capable. *In their own corruption* shall perish—*i.e.*, in their moral corruption, as in 1 : 4, and 2 : 19. Shall perish, lit. *shall be corrupted* = shall be destroyed, shall perish or be morally ruined. A similar sudden change of signification occurs at 1 Cor. 3 : 17 ; Rev. 11 : 18. ("To destroy those who corrupt the earth.") In their own corruption they shall perish, *receiving* in this manner *the wages of unrighteousness*, or, carrying off the wages consisting of unrighteousness : sin eternally punishing the sinner. The sense then is : Living and moving in moral corruption as in their native element, or immersed in it, they shall be morally ruined, and so receive a just retribution. Ever sinning, they shall be ever punished in and by their sinning ; and it is a righteous decree of God thus to leave them to the perpetual sway of their own passions, the everlasting fermentation of their own moral rottenness. Cf. Jno. 8 : 21, 24 ; Prov. 5 : 22 ; 14 : 32. Let a celebrated poet, a man of the world, illustrate the mode of receiving the wages of unrighteousness :

" The mind that broods o'er guilty woes,
Is like the scorpion girt by fire,
In circle narrowing as it glows ;
Till inly searched by thousand throes,
And maddening in her ire,
One sole and sad relief she knows—
The sting she nourished for her foes,
Whose venom never proved in vain,
And darts it into her desperate brain.
So do the dark in soul expire :
Or live, like scorpion, girt by fire.
So writhes the soul remorse hath riven,
Unloved of earth, unblest of heaven ;
Darkness above, despair beneath,
Around it flame, within it death."

" Deeming luxury in the daytime pleasure—spots and blemishes ! living luxuriously in their deceits ; while feasting with you, " having eyes full of an adulteress, and ceasing not from sin, enticing unestablished souls ; having a heart exercised in covetousness—children of the curse ! " Leaving the right way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam (the son), of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but had a reproof of his own transgression ; a dumb ass, having spoken with man's voice, hindered the prophet's madness.

Christ's apostle continues to illustrate *the justice* of the punishment of false teachers, and in so doing, he depicts more minutely their moral corruption. Our view of the connection of the participial clauses is indicated by the punctuation. *Deeming, having* (twice used) and *leaving* are casual participles.

In their own corruption they shall perish, receiving the wages of unrighteousness, or their punishment will be eminently just : 1. For they are despisers of lordship ; insolent, self-willed, and ignorant revilers of dignities, vs. 10-12.

2. *Inasmuch as they deem luxury in daylight pleasure—i.e.,* the chief good, or an essential constituent of it ; *spots and blemishes !* elliptical metaphors ; men who, like spots on garments and blemishes on the human body, are a disgrace to Christian societies : *living luxuriously in their deceits—i.e.,* in and by their deceits, or riches obtained by " pious frauds ; " *deceits*, a metonymy of the cause for the effects. *Luxury* is exhibited in costly raiment, Lk. 7 : 25, Gr., in gluttony and drunkenness, Jas. 5 : 5, Gr. Cf. 1 Pet. 4 : 3-5 ; Phil. 3 : 18, 19. Here the reference is especially to " sumptuous gluttonies and gorgeous feasts ; " to men who pamper their bodily appetites, who live to eat and to drink, or who worship hunger and thirst as gods. The ancients generally banquetted at night ; hence luxury in daylight denotes uncommon or enormous luxury. Their condemnation will be just because of their enormous luxury and consummate hypocrisy. (Mk. 12 : 40.)

3. It will be eminently just because of their abominable

lasciviousness. *While feasting with you* (on sacred occasions, such as the Lord's Supper and the love-feasts often connected with it, or at ordinary social meals, Jude, ver. 12 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 6, or at both, which we prefer) ; *having eyes full of an adulteress* (there is a metaphor in the word full), *and ceasing not from sin*, shooting forth incessant wanton glances, and so interpreting their sinful longing, and in this way *enticing* (lit. laying baits for : cf. Jas. 1 : 14, Gr.) *unestablished souls*, or silly women not fixed in the love of truth and holiness. Cf. 2 Tim. 3 : 6, 7 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 16. No combination of words could more clearly portray the abominable lewdness of these clerical seducers.

Women of the kind just described, whether married or not, often discover the strength of unhallowed passion by their lightness of speech, their dress, and general demeanor. And when false teachers discern such an one, they seem to see no one else ; her image appears on and fills their retina, and they forthwith lay their baits to entrap the approaching prey.

How many beautiful votaries and others have been seduced at the confessional in the name and under the forms of religion, will never be known until the day of judgment. But what awful discoveries will be made, when the sanctimonious seducers and the seduced confront each other in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ ! vs. 2, 9, 10. And what defence will they make to Him, no matter in what society of professed Christians they may be, who act in a similar manner ? Will not their condemnation be pre-eminently just, who put on the garb of piety to gratify their brutal propensities ? What too will they who yielded to such solicitations say, when standing before the Lord Christ ? Rev. 2 : 14, 15, and vs. 20-23. How unspeakably dreadful, to be driven from His presence, covered with everlasting shame ! 1 Jno. 2 : 28, Gr.

4. Their punishment will be just because of their avarice : *Since they have a heart exercised* (trained or disciplined like competitors in the public games) *in covetousnesses* (accord-

ing to the common text)—*i.e.*, in avaricious schemes and practices. They train their mental powers to obtain by various ways filthy lucre. Or, *in covetousness*, as some copies read—*i.e.*, Since they have their intellect and affections disciplined in respect of covetousness. Either way the sense is : Accomplished money-lovers, and skilled in the methods of obtaining it. Cf. ver. 3.

5. The punishment of these false teachers will be just, inasmuch as they are perfect imitators of Balaam—*i.e.*, promoters of lewdness and idolatry, because of avarice. *Children of the curse!* (in the prophetic style the article is often omitted where our idiom requires it)—*i.e.*, they who are as intimately connected with the curse of God's law as children are with their parents ; they who shall and ought to be punished. Cf. notes on 1 Pet. 1 : 14. (Mat. 23 : 15, son of Gehenna, Jno. 17 : 12, the son of perdition.) Children of the curse they are, *since leaving the right way, they* (that moment) *went astray*, etc. To leave the right or straight way, is voluntarily to abandon truth and righteousness, the way marked out by inspired writers, vs. 2, 21. To go astray from it, is to continue knowingly to propagate error and live in sin ; or, by profane babbling to make progress in ungodliness. 2 Tim. 2 : 16. To follow out (Gr.) the way of Balaam, is to imitate perfectly his conduct as a teacher (the phrases just explained are substitutions) ; a man who was signally rebuked by the Holy Truth-loving God.

“The rewards of divination” in the hands of the elders, the wages of unrighteousness (here literally used), Balaam loved. And his solemn declaration to the contrary was feigned. Neither would he have gone with the elders, after the Lord had expressly forbidden it, if he had not been exceedingly avaricious. Num. 22. Nor would he have given Balak the infamous counsel he did—namely, to entice Israel to lewdness and idolatry, if the love of money had not been his master passion. Num. 31 : 15, 16 ; 25 : 1-9 ; Rev. 2 : 14, 15. Those, then, who knowingly pervert the

Gospel of God unto lasciviousness and idolatry, and that because of the accursed lust of gold, are perfect imitators of Balaam : " whose condemnation is just." And what consummate hypocrisy it is for such teachers to boast of " the holy apostolical succession !"

Balaam was signally rebuked by the miraculous speaking of a dumb animal ; for Jehovah opened its mouth. In more idiomatic English : *But he had a refutation of his peculiar transgression, when a dumb ass spoke with man's voice, and restrained the prophet's madness.* The speaking of the ass was so unquestionably miraculous that the conscience of Balaam was suddenly smitten, Num. 22 : 34, and he for a moment checked in his mad career. And what was the animal herein but a mere instrument in the hand of the Almighty ? " Neither was the miracle needless or superfluous ; it was very proper to convince Balaam that the mouth and tongue were under God's direction, and that the same divine power which caused the ass to speak contrary to its nature, could in like manner make him utter blessings contrary to his inclination." (T. Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies.) *His own transgression (idias paranomias)*, that characteristic of him ; hence his peculiar transgression ; which consisted in desiring and attempting to do what God had expressly forbidden him by a special revelation, and in his persisting in that intention at the second visit of the princes or elders, all the while pretending a great regard for the authority of God ; and in promoting lewdness and idolatry, when his desire of cursing Israel in words was prevented ; and all because " he loved the wages of unrighteousness." *The prophet's madness* = his peculiar transgression. To act deliberately against the known will of God, to promote lewdness and idolatry, for the sake of a present fleeting advantage, while openly professing a great regard for the divine authority ; that is the worst kind of moral insanity. A wicked man may be a prophet, or speak for a time under the control of the Holy Spirit, Num. 24 : 2 ; Mat. 7 : 22 ; 1 Cor. 13 : 3 ; and Moses, himself an un-

doubted prophet, by putting some of Balaam's prophecies in the Pentateuch, has thus given his testimony to the inspiration of those which he has recorded. But Balaam generally resorted to enchantments, and used divination, Num. 24 : 1, and hence he is called a soothsayer or diviner, Jos. 13 : 22, an expression applied to false prophets, Deut. 18 : 10, 14 ; 1 Sam. 6 : 1 ; 2 Ki. 17 : 17. (See Butler's Sermon on the Character of Balaam, and Bush on Numbers.)

11. B C K L S Oec Thph before the Lord, *para kurio*, as c. t. ; A vg omit. The difficulty of explanation seems to have led to its omission in the authorities referred to, since it is by no means easy to see why the phrase should be inserted, if not genuine.

12. A B C S have natural *after* born, K L as c. t. ; which we prefer, since it would puzzle any one but a learned critic to show how men or animals can be born except naturally. *Irrational* and *natural* are adjectives qualifying *animals* ; descriptive adjuncts showing the kind of living beings intended. The comma after "beasts" in Eng. Vers. should be erased. K L cop sah vg in their corruption shall perish, as c. t. *kataphtharesontai* (*kata* intensive) ; A C S in their corruption shall also perish, *kai phtharesontai*, B in their corruption shall perish (having according to Mai neither *kai* nor *kata*).

13. B S have *adikoumenoi*, which is a palpable error for *komioumenoi* (arising from a hasty glance at similar terminations). Since our language has no future participle, we may use the present when the future participle in Greek, as here, is explanatory of a preceding verb in the future tense ; they shall perish, receiving. Or, receiving as they shall : Alford. Or, and so receive : Lillie. *Luxury in the daytime* : either luxury summed up in a day, which is a possible signification of the original, or rather luxury in daylight, as our translators rightly judged. Cf. Acts 2 : 15 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 7. A C K L S cop deceits, *apatais* as c. t. ; B vg sah love-feasts, *agapais*. A according to T. Smith has *agapais*, but according to Tischendorf it has *apatais* from the first hand. We think the former reading genuine ; the other reading may be accounted for from a desire to make Peter conform to Jude.

14. B C an adulteress, A S adultery : we prefer the former, since 'having eyes full of an adulteress' is the only natural and congruous expression. (*Akatapaustous* is a participle of the middle voice.) A B C K L S cop vg covetousness (gen. sing.), sah and some cursives covetousnesses (dat. plur.) as c. t.

15. A S *kataleipontes*, B as c. t. *katalipontes*, A C K L Bosor, a Chal-

daic mode of pronouncing Beor (as Lightfoot and others suppose) ; B sah Beor.

16. Lit. *in man's voice* = with man's voice, like the dative in Classic Greek : *man's* by a metaphor = with a voice like that of men. The aorists, *spoke* and *hindered*, refer to momentary acts of the past.

¹⁷ These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest ; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. ¹⁸ For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. ¹⁹ While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption : for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. ²⁰ For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. ²¹ For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. ²² But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

The awful nature and everlasting duration of their punishment foretold, and the justice of it illustrated. *These are wells without water, and mists by a tempest driven, for whom the blackness of darkness forever is kept.* These false teachers are ostentatious hypocrites, specious but deceiving, like wells without water ; disappointing the expectations of those who look to them for religious instruction. *And mists* (according to the reading now generally received) *by a tempest driven* : these false teachers are perfectly helpless, no more able to escape the divine indignation than mists to resist the force of the stormy wind. Or, as mists by a tempest driven, so are these in the hands of the holy Judge. No metaphorical proposition could more clearly exhibit their inevitable destruction. That it is rightly explained, is evident (1.) From the facts that *and mists*, not *clouds*, is the genuine reading ; and hence Jude's expression, " Clouds

without water, borne along by winds," is not a rhetorical parallel : like dark rushing wind-clouds that bring no rain—*i.e.*, specious but deceiving as teachers ; but that thought Peter expresses by *wells without water*. And instead of 'mists by a tempest driven,' Jude has "wandering stars ;" describing not their helplessness in the hands of the Judge, but their momentary brilliancy in the church. (2.) From the fact that this mode of explanation agrees well with what follows : These ostentatious hypocrites, helpless under the wrath of the Almighty, are persons *for whom the blackness of darkness forever is kept*. (3.) Otherwise, the two clauses express the same thought, their pretentious uselessness as teachers. But a tautology should never be assumed, when another explication is obvious and pertinent. (4.) It is further confirmed by analogous passages. Prov. 14 : 32. "The wicked is driven away (from earth into the prison of the disobedient) in his wickedness ; but the righteous hath hope in his death : " driven too from the presence of Christ at the great day. Cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 9, 10 ; Mat. 25 : 41, 46. "Not so the ungodly ; but like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment," etc. Cf. Ps. 68 : 1, 2.

Calvin, adhering to the common text, explains the clause of the harm they bring upon their followers ; but the allusion is not to calamitous storms, or tornadoes sweeping over the surface of the earth, but to mists (or clouds, if any will so have it) driven by winds out of the sight of men. Others interpret it of their fickleness as teachers, or the instability of their doctrinal tenets ; but the reference to Eph. 4 : 14, is not to the point, for there, not teachers, but the taught are designated, and they are likened to billows of the sea, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, etc. ; unstable disciples of crafty teachers.

For whom the blackness of darkness forever is kept. In these words the awful nature and everlasting duration of their punishment are described. *Zophos* does not mean *mist*, but *blackness*, the blackness peculiar to Tartarus ; as in

ver. 4, and Jude, vs. 6, 13. *The blackness of darkness* = the thickest blackness; a mental state in which there is no light or gladness, but sorrow unmixed with joy, and this caused by sinning, Ps. 97 : 11; 1 Jno. 1 : 6; 1 Pet. 2 : 9, and all *forever*; a state of everlasting rebellion against God with everlasting misery. There is also a metonymy combined with the metaphor; so that the full sense is, For whom a place in which they will endure the severest punishment is kept. Lit. *hath been kept*—i.e., long ago prepared and still reserved for them. The blackest cell in Tartarus is kept for these false teachers: so Christ's propheta-apostle expressly teaches.

To assume, as some do, that the wicked, in the intermediate state or after the day of judgment, will be restored to holiness and happiness, is a doctrine wholly unscriptural. For (1.) punishment has no natural tendency to produce love to God, or to overcome the love of sinning. See notes on vs. 4, 9. (2.) Depraved men can be regenerated and sanctified only by the Holy Spirit. But God has nowhere promised the Spirit to restore to holiness the incorrigible in Tartarus. (3.) Their condition cannot be improved, if they persist in sinning. But that is expressly foretold: "In their own corruption they shall perish and so receive the wages of unrighteousness." But sin and misery are inseparable. (4.) Our Lord Himself most explicitly declares that it will be everlasting punishment; lasting forever from the time of His coming. Mat. 10 : 28; 25 : 41, 46; cf. 2 Thes. 1 : 9. And they are false teachers who affirm that the blackness of darkness forever means a temporary blackness, which is to disappear and be followed by everlasting light. (5.) If everlasting punishment means a temporary or age-enduring punishment, then everlasting life means a temporary or age-enduring life; for the same word is used to express the duration of the misery of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous. Mat. 25 : 46. If punishment in that passage means restoration to holiness and happiness, then life means a reduction into sin and misery. But

such a mode of explanation is a perfect violation of the laws of language, irrational and absurd. (See Eph. 5 : 3-6.)

The justice of the present and future punishment of these false teachers is especially illustrated in the preceding paragraph, vs. 10-16 ; here, *the justice of its everlasting duration* : For whom the blackness of darkness forever is kept. *For, speaking great swelling words of vanity*, etc. Their everlasting punishment is just ; (1.) Because they are pre-eminent hypocrites, making great professions of possessing truth and holiness, while destitute of both—wells without water. (2.) Because they teach blasphemous and known errors, promise impunity, and by their instructions and example tempt and lead to licentiousness those who had truly escaped from the gross wickedness of their former associates, vs. 18, 19. (3.) Because these false apostate teachers, by turning away from the known holy precepts of Christ and inducing others to do the same, bring themselves and those whom they entice into an incurable state and habit of moral corruption, vs. 20-22.

We should recollect that they who affirm that it is not just for God to condemn sinners to everlasting punishment, are not themselves apostles or prophets in the church, but false teachers. Cf. 2 Thes. 1 : 6-10 ; Rev. 14 : 9-11 ; 19 : 1-3 ; 20 : 11-15 ; 22 : 15. What are their opinions and arguments worth, when they contradict clear and unmistakable revelations from God ? “ The merciful doctors ” are those who tell men the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, no matter how awful that truth may be. Jno. 3 : 36.

Lit. *For, speaking* (uttering, distinctly enunciating, as in ver. 16) *great swelling words of vanity*, *they entice*, (lay baits) *in the lusts of the flesh, by lasciviousnesses*, *those who had truly escaped from them that walk in error ; freedom to them promising*, *while they themselves are slaves of corruption : for by what any one is overcome by that is he also enslaved*.

The blackness of everlasting darkness is kept for them ; *for they entice those who had truly escaped from them that*

walk in error : they tempt to sensual indulgence and entrap those who, in consequence of their knowledge and profession of Christianity, had abandoned the gross wickedness of their former companions ; they who wander from the path which the law of nature and of God prescribes. 1 Pet. 4 : 3. And they entice them, (1.) by *uttering great swelling words of vanity* : strictly, *over-bulky things* ; not mere bombastic truthless words, but words or doctrines big with insolence and blasphemy. See how the same word is used, Sept. Dan. 11 : 36. Eng. Vers. "marvellous things." It is the same as "speaking *great things*," Dan. 7 : 8, 11, 20. Cf. Rev. 13 : 5. Over-bulky words *of vanity*, or emptiness—*i.e.*, altogether destitute of truth, perfectly false or erroneous. Cf. Rom. 1 : 21 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 20. The full sense then is : Doctrines pre-eminently irreverent and truthless. (2.) They entice *in the lusts of the flesh*, in and by carnal lusts, 1 Pet. 2 : 11 ; 4 : 3, and as Peter himself further explains it, *by lasciviousnesses*, by their licentious ways, ver. 2, or exceedingly wanton mode of living. They entrap them by very irreverent blasphemous doctrines and by wanton actions. The greatness of their sin is shown by their seducing those who had left their former profligate associates, and who were externally virtuous, and by their manner of doing it ; and so the justice of their everlasting punishment is illustrated.

The Antinomian Gnostics agreed with the sceptical pagans in holding that there is nothing right or wrong by nature, but only by law, custom, and human opinion ; which is a great swelling doctrine of vanity. They distinctly enunciated similar tenets by denying Jehovah as the Creator and Governor of our world, and attributing its creation and government to an inferior æon, angel or demon ; by the crowd of gods, male and female, which they made out of their own imaginations, and by the filthy myths pertaining to their conjunctions or sexual intercourse ; by asserting that Old Testament Prophecy, or the greater portion of it, originated not from God, but from half-taught æons who

blundered greatly ; by affirming that Gnosis (science or knowledge falsely so-called, 1 Tim. 6 : 20, 21), or a belief of their horrid caricature of Christianity, was enough, owing to a supposed reception of spiritual substance from their Ple-roma (or absolute hardly-conscious god), to prevent them and their disciples from being at all injured by any sensual indulgences. By these and similar methods they seared their own consciences with the hot iron of their doctrines of demons, and drove the fear of God out of the hearts of their dupes—for such teachers the blackness of darkness forever is kept, and even Satan cannot deny the justice of it.

Some Pantheistic teachers, like the so-called “Spiritual Libertines” in the time of Calvin, have gone still farther, making truth and error, sin and holiness, the devil and his temptations, and everlasting punishment in hell, the subjects of their witticisms ; pronouncing them all to be mere dreams of superstitious men. They have even most blasphemously and falsely declared that, since God works all in all, to commit sin is impossible—as if God Himself were the only sinner !

The self-styled “Latter-Day Saints” claim to have received a revelation from God in favor of their monstrous polygamy ; in open opposition to what Christ the Lord hath most clearly decided. Mat. 19 : 3-9 ; Mk. 10 : 2-12.

Some modern “Spiritualists” utter great swelling words of vanity, and the most decided of them treat marriage with contempt (Heb. 13 : 4), and profess to regulate their brutal instincts according to the suggestions of departed spirits—or lost spirits from Tartarus, for they who give the lie to Holy Scripture cannot be in paradise. 1 Tim. 4 : 1-3, Gr. 3. They entice *by promising them freedom*, freedom or exemption from the blackness of everlasting darkness, from everlasting punishment in hell ; permission to live as they please, with a promise of impunity in so doing : in this manner contradicting what Christ has taught by prophets and apostles. Cf. notes on vs. 1, 4.

A promise very unsuitable to fall from the lips of these

teachers ; *themselves the slaves of corruption*. How preposterous for those overpowered by divers lusts, some of them brutal, to talk about freedom ! How can they who teach the ethics of hell and wallow in lust as swine in mire be the servants of the immaculate Jesus ! What is such preaching worth ? For if we are conquered by our evil passions here, we become their slaves ; and when men " die in their sins," their captivity to iniquity is everlasting. Jno. 8 : 34 ; Rom. 6 : 16, 23.

No intelligent being, at any time or in any world, can be free indeed, unless his will is uniformly determined in favor of truth and righteousness. All others carry a hell within them, and ever writhe in the chains of their own tyrannical passions, so that the blackness of darkness forever is the development and completion of their present sinful wretchedness. So they eat to all eternity the fruit of their own doings, and are filled with their own devices. Prov. 1 : 24-31. After all their abominable errors are perfectly refuted by their own bitter experience, can memory, reason, and conscience, cease to operate ? What sinner from himself can flee ? And how can sinners, eternally sinning, annihilate God, or destroy His truthfulness and justice ?

The everlasting punishment of these false teachers is just, because they are abominable apostates from Christianity, vs. 20-22. *For*, ver. 20, is connected grammatically with the last clause of the preceding verse : *enslaved* they are, *for* after mental illumination and external reformation they are again overpowered by their former polluting vices, and thus their moral corruption after apostasy is worse than before their knowledge and confession of the Lord and Saviour. But it is also logically connected with the last clause of the seventeenth verse : For such slaves of sin the blackness of everlasting darkness is kept ; *for if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world in the acknowledgment* (in and by the knowledge and profession, cf. notes on 1 : 2) *of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are yet again entangled by*

these pollutions and overcome, their last state hath become worse than the first : for it were better for them not to have acknowledged the way of righteousness, than after they have acknowledged it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But that of the true proverb (that signified by the true proverb) hath happened to (or overtaken) them : The dog has turned back to his own vomit ; and, The sow that was washed to her wallowing in mire ; or, to her miry wallowing place.

Their everlasting punishment is just, because as apostates, they are incorrigible ; which is shown from the fact that they sin against the clearest light and knowledge ; that they sear their consciences by practically disregarding the holiest religion ever promulgated on earth, or refuse to obey Him whom they once acknowledged both as Saviour and Lord, and with both eyes open return to the practice of gross sensual indulgences, and so make themselves and their dupes twofold more the children of hell than before their profession ; which incurable state and habit of moral corruption are illustrated by the proverbs adduced.

Their *acknowledgment of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* proves that their consciences had been awakened to the danger of their sinful way of living. *To escape the pollutions of the world* by such acknowledgment, is to abandon gross sins, or become externally reformed. To be *again entangled by these pollutions*, as animals are fastened in a snare, *and overcome* by them, as soldiers taken in war and enslaved, 1 Sam. 17 : 9 ; is to become completely subject to the dominion of former shameful sins. Ver. 21 is a further explication of the one immediately preceding it : *for* it had been *better*, etc., better so far as their punishment is concerned. Cf. Mat. 26 : 24. The proverbs cited are substitutions : the constant return of these animals to their instinctive filthy habits being put for practical apostasy, or the habitual commission of former abominable sins by the morally unclean, or unrenewed.

Whitby, Fronmüller, and others, hold that this context shows that those once renewed may fall wholly and finally from a state of grace. But (1.) that is to make this passage contradict. Jno. 10 : 27-30 ; Rom. 8 : 28-39 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 5 : 5 : 10, 11. (2.) An intellectual assent to and profession of Christianity may exist and appear in those who give clear evidence, not of their regeneration, but of the natural operations of the human understanding and conscience. To fall wholly from their acknowledgment of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and persist in it, is one thing ; for the divinely imparted life to become extinct in any, is another. (3.) Abstinence from gross sins is always commendable, yet of itself it is no infallible proof of regeneration, since some become externally moral, not only from fear of hell, but even out of a regard to health, wealth, or reputation ; God's authority being altogether ignored in the matter. (4.) Those professors who return to and habitually indulge in the practice of their old sins, are blind and near-sighted, the Word of God having never been rooted in their hearts. 2 Pet. 1 : 9 ; Mat. 13 : 20, 21 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 19. (5.) Prov. 26 : 11, a part of which is here cited, shows that the unrenewed are intended ; for in the book of Proverbs the renewed are never called fools. (6.) In the Sacred Word impenitent and shameless sinners, with their teachers and leaders in the Satanic School, are called dogs and swine ; not those truly renewed. Deut. 23 : 18 ; Isa. 65 : 10-12 ; Mat. 7 : 6 ; Phil. 3 : 2 ; Rev. 22 : 15.

Thus has Christ's apostle foretold the rise of false teachers in the church, and their continuance in it until the day of judgment. He has portrayed their characteristics, predicted and illustrated the certainty, justice, and everlasting duration of their punishment, with that of their many disciples and imitators. And this prophecy concerning the sect-promoters, the deniers of the Redeemer as Lord, the lascivious, avaricious, hypocritical, and lawless, has been most wonderfully fulfilled for more than a thousand years.

It is also foretold that the righteous will be rescued from trials, when our Lord hath come.

But not a syllable does the prophet-apostle utter concerning a millennium intervening, or of the conversion of the nations before the second advent of Christ, according to the prevalent opinion of the churches now. Evident it is, therefore, that Peter held Christ's second coming to be before the millennium ; before it, for the purpose of introducing and perpetuating His personal reign on earth, and for the restoration of all things in this sin-cursed world, not by the church of this dispensation, but by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. 1 : 11, and vs. 16-19 ; Acts 3 : 19-21.

17. A B C S cop sah and mists, L Thph clouds ; A C L Epiphanius Thph Oec forever (to eternity), B S cop sah vg Augustine omit. The blackness of darkness for ever, is a very original and peculiar expression, occurring but twice in the N. T. (cf. 1 Sam. 2 : 9), but since it is repeated verbatim by Jude, that decides the matter in favor of its genuineness ; for Jude quotes from Peter, not Peter from Jude.

18. A B C S K L *aselgeiais* without the preposition ; cop vg *aselgeias*, a mistake by overlooking a single letter. C S K L *ontôs* = truly, Eng. Vers., "clean ;" A B cop sah vg *oligôs* (Aquila, Isa. 10 : 7), which seems to mean within a little, scarcely : A B C S vg *apopheugontas*. Hence the reading now generally received by critical editors is, Those scarcely escaping, etc. But K L truly escaped as c. t., which we prefer, since the readings are more difficult ; the others look like attempted doctrinal explanations. Besides, the verb without *ontos*, in 1 : 4, means to flee from, or really escape. K L C S also have *ontos*, as above indicated.

22. B C *kulismon*, A K L S *kulisma*.

CHAPTER III.

THE CERTAINTY OF CHRIST'S COMING.

A prediction concerning scoffers or mockers ; in which the Apostle

I. Commends to the reverent and practical attention of the disciples the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures as a revelation from the Lord and Saviour, 1, 2.

II. The coming of the mockers towards the end of this dispensation foretold ; their character and principal tenet, 3, 4.

III. A refutation of the assumption on which they base their mockery, 5-7.

IV. Why the Lord apparently delays His coming, 8, 9.

V. A prediction of the destruction by fire from earth and heaven of the pre-eminently ungodly who shall be living at the coming of Christ, 10-12.

VI. A prediction of the renovation of our world as the eternal home of the righteous, 13.

The conclusion, 14-18 ; in which there are exhortations to prepare diligently for His coming, and to account the long-suffering of the Lord salvation ; which exhortations are followed by a commendation of Paul as an inspired apostle, and as agreeing with Peter in the principal topics of this second epistle. There are also exhortations to steadfastness, and to growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is worthy of present and eternal adoration.

¹ This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you ; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance : ² that ye may be mindful of the words which were

spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.

The main design of the Apostle in writing his epistles, and especially this second epistle. 1. To remind them as sanctified and truth-loving of the predictions of the holy prophets as to Christ's coming and kingdom, the glory of the chosen in it, and the punishment of the incorrigible in that day ; also, of the apostolical commandment concerning the necessity of increase in holiness, in order to enter triumphantly into His everlasting kingdom. 2 Ep. 1 : 3-21 ; 3 : 14, 15, 17, 18 ; 1 Ep. 1 : 3-15 ; 4 : 5, 17, 18 ; 4 : 13 ; 5 : 4.

2. To foretell the rise, characteristics, and doom, not only of false teachers, but also of scoffers : as in the subsequent context. In more idiomatic English, with a change of punctuation : Beloved, this is already the second epistle I am writing to you, in which epistles I awaken your pure mind by way of remembrance ; that ye may be mindful of the words spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of your apostles, proceeding from the Lord and Saviour.

The position of the adverb (now or already) in the original, shows that it modifies the adjective, not the verb ; and the whole clause intimates that but a short time had elapsed since the first epistle was written. *In which* (plural) epistles ; = in both which ; or, in which, as in the former. Lit. *in reminding* = by reminding, or by way of remembrance ; as in 1 : 13, where the metaphor, to *awaken*, is explained. Your *pure* mind : primarily, examined by sunlight ; hence tested, found genuine, pure and unmixed ; a mind sincerely loving truth and holiness ; transparently or manifestly sincere. Cf. Phil. 1 : 10 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 8 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 12 ; 2 : 17. *In order that ye may be mindful of*, etc. ; that ye may believe the predictions spoken by the holy prophets, and obey the precepts of your apostles, which are a revelation from the Lord and Saviour. *To be mindful of*, call to mind—i.e.,

in order to believe and obey, which is a characteristic of a sanctified and ingenuous mind. It is in sense analogous to *Give heed* and *keep in your hearts* the Prophetic Word. 1 : 19. A comma must be put after *apostles*, in order to make the sense obvious. Lit. *of the Lord and Saviour*, but it is the genitive of source or origin = proceeding, or originating from Him as the author : and these words are logically connected with both the preceding clauses. The predictions concerning God's purposes and the precepts relative to human duty, whether expressed by Prophets or Apostles, are a revelation from Him who is our Lord and Saviour. The same is true of the writings of the N. T. prophets, such as Mark and Luke, but when these prophets are intended, the word prophets is always put after apostles ; as in Eph. 2 : 20 ; 3 : 5. *Your apostles* ; referring to himself and Paul. Peter taught the churches in Asia Minor by his pen, 1 Ep. 5 : 12 ; 2 Ep. 3 : 1 ; Paul both orally and by writing. 1 Pet. 1 : 12 ; 3 : 15. *The commandment* relates to the Gospel in its ethical aspect, the moral precepts taught by Christ's apostles considered as one system ; all enforced from the love of God shown to us in Christ, the Lord and Saviour. Cf. 1 : 3-21 with 1 Pet. 1 : 3-20 ; 2 : 2 with ver. 21, and notes on Jas. 1 : 25. The prophets are called *holy* because they were consecrated to the service of the Eternal Word as His interpreters. In 1 : 21, *God's* holy men ; here, the holy prophets *of the Lord and Saviour* : another incidental recognition and proof of our Lord's true and proper divinity ; and here, ver. 2 is analogous to 1 Pet. 1 : 10-12. The Spirit of Christ in prophets and apostles.

2. Some cursives Oec as c. t., but A B C K L S vg Thph your apostles, which is unquestionably genuine. The infinitive (referring to the cognate noun in ver. 1) is indicative of intention or further definition ; *entoles* is governed by it, implied or understood, and the genitives that follow show from whom the Old and New Testaments have originated ; or, as Paul expresses it, " the Word of Christ." Col. 4 : 16. To disregard the writings of the Prophets and confine our attention wholly to the New Testament, is to dig out the left eye in order to see better *with the right*, and to sin against Him who is the great author of both.

¹ Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, ¹ and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation.

Knowing this first, etc. Inasmuch as ye know, from prophetic and apostolic predictions of which I am reminding you, this fact as a matter of the first practical importance—namely, *that there shall come at the end of the days, mockers, walking according to their own lusts*, etc. *Mockers* (as the word is rendered in Jude), like sneering boys, treat the most sacred subjects with levity and contempt, and in particular ridicule the power and coming of Jesus Christ as King and Judge : it is the same as scoffers or scorners. *At the end of the days*, or, *in the last of the days*—i.e., near the conclusion of the time in which we are now living ; or, in the last period of the present Christian dispensation. This phrase, and the corresponding Hebrew one, refers to the future, generally to the distant future, reckoning from the time of the speaker or writer ; as in Gen. 49 : 1 ; Num. 24 : 14 ; Mic. 4 : 1. (Cf. Jude, ver. 18, with 1 Pet. 1 : 5, Gr.) Our knowledge of the coming of these mockers is of the greatest practical importance, in order to uphold our faith in our Lord and Saviour, who has revealed it ; also, to prevent discouragement and faintness of heart, and to promote steadfastness, vs. 17, 18. *Mockers in mockery* (as the oldest manuscripts and versions have it), *walking according to their own lusts* ; thinking, speaking, and acting, not according to the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures as the rule, but according to their individual or peculiar sinful desires (*kata tas idias*, etc., cf. 2 : 16) : living as their own lusts dictate, but all in one respect alike—i.e., moving in derision as in their native element. *And saying, Where is the promise of His coming?* (Promise by metonymy for the fulfilment of it.) Where is there any evidence that what you Christians call the promise of His coming will ever be fulfilled? He who never means to come stays long.

Cf. Isa. 5 : 19 ; Mal. 2 : 17. They deny Christ's coming (His personal presence, *parousia*), for all the purposes foretold by His prophets and apostles ; sneer at it, and ridicule it as a fable. But Deists wish to appear as Rationalists, and hence their apparent appeal to reason : *for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue* (every thing in external nature) *thus* (just as they now are), *from the beginning of the creation* : or, *all things from the beginning of the creation continue thus* ; pointing, so to speak, with outstretched fingers to earth and sky.

This, most certainly, is not " a prophecy written after the event," as mockers speak ; and of its fulfilment no one in his senses, who is at all acquainted with the Deistical Controversy, or who meets with scorners, can for a moment doubt. The mockers assume, 1. That since the creation no miracle, properly so-called, has been wrought by God ; or that the course of nature has been uniform from the beginning, precisely as it is now. Hume, for example, said that no kind or degree of evidence could assure posterity of a miraculous fact. As if a whole nation, from the time of Moses till now, had conspired to testify falsely respecting the wonderful deeds which God wrought by the Hebrew legislator ! (See Leslie's *Easy Method with the Deists*.) As if the Christian Church could have existed at all, without the most indubitable evidence of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead !

But how, or on what ground, can any mocker know that the course of nature has been uniform from the beginning ? Only on the ground of human testimony, which is decidedly against the scoffer's assumption in the matter ; so that his so-called argument is a bare-faced sophism. (See Brougham's *Natural Theology*, Butler's *Analogy*, Faber's *Difficulties of Infidelity*, Campbell on *Miracles*, Paley's and Hopkins' *Evidences of Christianity*.)

Strauss says that a miracle is impossible. Impossible ! if so, when and by whom was the Almighty annihilated ? Or who has wrested from His hands the control and govern-

ment of our world? Renan seems to think the biblical accounts of miracles to be pleasant fictions. As if Peter, Paul, and John exposed themselves to a life of the most toilsome labors, for the sake of "cunningly-devised fables!" No : they lived and died as the benefactors of mankind, not for mere opinions' sake, not for myths, but because they saw Jesus after His resurrection, and knew that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

2. The scoffers also assume that no miracle will hereafter be wrought by God ; and hence they infer that the second personal coming of Christ, with all the preceding, accompanying, and subsequent events, is purely fictitious : thus most emphatically rejecting the Holy Scriptures as a revelation from the Lord and Saviour. It is well enough, say they, to believe in God as the Creator of the universe, but to hold as true all that the Scriptures declare of the Christ, and to live as He requires, that is a different matter.

" Let us cast off their cords,
And fling away from us their bands.
He that sitteth in the heavens is laughing,
The Lord is mocking them." Ps. 2.

That the most eminent Deists have lived according to their own desires as their Bible (either the love of fame, or other grosser pleasures), is indisputable. Herbert, the father of the English Deists, and Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Paine, are in this particular names that are sufficiently suggestive. These, and such like, deal in high-sounding sophisms, and make scoffing or "ridicule the test of truth." Nor was it otherwise, when Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian lived and wrote ; their master passions, as with all their successors, darkening the understanding and defiling the conscience.

By speaking of *the fathers* in their sneering way, they mean all the ancients since the beginning of creation, who believed the promise spoken of : not simply the patriarchs, nor the prophets and apostles, nor the men living at the

first advent of the Lord ; as some have supposed. They are mockers of Christ's coming as King and Judge, and of those who look for and love His appearing.

But since it is not easy to tell what mockers mean, there is no absurdity in supposing that by *the sleeping* of the fathers they intend a sleep from which there is no awakening, or annihilation, as those called " Mortal Deists ;" ridiculing all expectations of the resurrection of the dead, designating it, like Celsus, as " the hope of worms"—" dignified brutes," as they virtually profess to be, soon to return to nonentity. But what scoffer *can prove* that God will annihilate his soul at death, at Christ's coming, or at any other time, much as he may desire it ?

Perhaps also by *the creation* they simply mean, As you Christians call it ; they in truth deeming the physical universe with all it contains the result of blind unconscious and unintelligent causes, the product of " inscrutable force," as the Materialists ; or itself very God, as the Pantheists or Monists ; or else wholly denying the reality of any external world, as the Idealists or Subjectivists. So they say in their hearts, " There is no God ;" so they deify themselves, and annihilate the Lord and Saviour—in desire and intention. It thus appears that Deism or Infidelity leads by an inclined plane to Atheism ; but since it is irrational to suppose that an infinite variety of effects, or the universe with all it contains, has originated and is upheld without a perfectly wise and almighty agent, Deists generally profess, and many truly hold, that God alone is the Creator of the universe ; and of such the Apostle strictly speaks, as is evident from the refutation that follows ; though even that is not addressed to them (who are all along spoken of in the third person), but to the disciples.

3. K L Oec Augustine (De Civ Dei 20, 18). in the last of the days, *ep' eschaton* (sc. *chronon*) *ton hemeron* ; C by the first hand *ep' eschato* (dat. sing.) etc. ; A B S cop sah vg Thph Jerome, *ep' eschaton* (sc. *chronon*), etc. But the expressions, In the last (time) of the days, and In the last (times) of the days, are identical in signification. A B C S vg cop sah Augustine (illusione illudentes) in mockery, K L Oec Thph omit.

⁵ For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out (marg. Gr. consisting) of the water and in the water ⁶ whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished : ⁷ but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

A refutation of the assumption on which the scoffers base their mockery, designed for the confirmation of believers : since of scorers as a class it may justly be said that they "delight in their scorning," "love not rebuke," are proud and self-conceited ; ready and willing to believe any thing except what God has revealed in Holy Scripture. Hence reasoning with such men on moral and theological topics is, in most instances, like water spilled on the ground. But for all that, it is important that believers be established and animated, while surrounded and assaulted by mockers.

Christ will never come, say the scoffers, for that involves an astonishing series of miracles ; but no miracle has been wrought since the creation, and none will be wrought hereafter. The Apostle replies. (1.) That is to ignore the fact of the universal deluge. (2.) That is to ignore our prediction as Christ's apostle concerning the destruction of the ungodly at His appearing : which proves that his aim is to confirm the minds of believers in divine revelation. Speaking in the name of the Judge of all, he shows what was the doom of the mockers in Noah's day, and what will be the doom of scoffers when Christ hath come. As the deluge confuted those, so the fire will confute these. (3.) That is to reject prophetic and apostolic predictions of the renovation of our world at His coming.

All things do not continue as from the beginning of the creation. *For they are willingly ignorant of this, that by the word of God the heaven was from of old, and the earth out of water and by water consisting, by which the then world, deluged with water, perished.*

Lit. *For this escapes them willing* = for they are willingly ignorant of this fact—namely, that by the word of God the heaven, etc. Cf. ver. 8. *By the word of God* : By His omnipotent will, or fiat. So in Gen. 1, *God said* often occurs. “He said, and it was; he commanded, and it stood :” thousands and myriads of ages did not intervene between the command and the accomplished effect, but the one followed the other “as the thunderbolt pursues the flash.” Ps. 33 : 9, with ver. 6. “*By the word of Jehovah* were the heavens made; and all the host of them *by the breath of his mouth*”—*i.e.*, with the greatest quickness and facility; as a breath, word, or command proceeds from human lips.

Lit. *Heavens were from of old* (well-known natural objects when first mentioned do not in Greek require the article)—*i.e.*, the heaven or atmosphere did not exist from eternity, but from the beginning, or the indefinite past; 2 : 3, Gr. *ekpalai* = from of old, not found elsewhere in N. T. Compare Ps. 102 : 25; Heb. 1 : 10. *Heavens* (the corresponding Hebrew word is found only in the plural) here = the air, or atmosphere, as in vs. 7, 10, 12, 13. In the N. T. often both in the singular as in 2 Pet. 1 : 18; Jas. 5 : 18, and in the plural, as in Mat. 3 : 17; Mk. 1 : 10; but in the same signification. (Eng. Vers. generally “heaven,” sometimes “air,” Mat. 6 : 26, and “sky,” Mat. 16 : 2, 3.) “God called the expanse heavens,” or heaven. Gen. 1 : 8.

And earth out of water and by water consisting, *by which*, by which constitution of things, or by means of water from the atmosphere and the ocean, Gen 7 : 11, *the then world*, Gr. *ho tote kosmos*, the world as then existing, *deluged with water*, submerged and covered with water as at its creation, *perished*—*i.e.*, its order or beauty was greatly changed for the worse, and its ungodly inhabitants destroyed. Cf. 2 : 5; 1 Pet. 3 : 19, 20; Gen. 6 : 13; 7 : 19-24. So false in fact is the assumption of the mockers that all things in external nature have ever been as they now are; for after the world had existed for about seventeen hundred years as

the home of men, or continued so long in its uniform course, it was suddenly covered with water as at its creation, and so by an astonishing miracle its impious inhabitants were destroyed. Cf. Mat. 24 : 37-39.

Lit. *Out of water and by water standing together*. The only difficulty in interpretation arises from these words, which are somewhat obscure because of their brevity. Light may be thrown on them by following in the translation the order of the original, and by supplying what seems to be implied : For they are willingly ignorant of this, that the heaven was from of old, *and the earth arising out of the water and by the water standing together, by the word of God*.

There are two interpretations. Some refer the clause to the creation of the earth ; others to its conservation since its creation. *Dia* with the genitive is = *through, by, or by means of* ; not *in*, as in Eng. Vers. *Ex hūdatis* = *out of water* (which is most accurate), *of*, or *from water*. *Sunestosa* = standing together, cf. Lk. 9 : 32, consisting, or subsisting. Col. 1 : 17.

We hold that the Apostle refers to the *conservation* of the earth since its creation. (1.) For although the phrase, out of water, in itself considered, might mean arising from water as its material cause ; yet that signification is precluded by the arguments that follow. (2.) *Sunestosa* is the perfect participle = having stood (when first created) and still standing together. It denotes continued existence from a definite or indefinite past up to the time of the writer or speaker ; not creation, for the Apostle assumes that the earth and its atmosphere *were* by the word of God, or began to be from of old. In Col. 1 : 17, it is written : *In Him all things stand together*, or consist—*i.e.*, by a power resident in Him the universe subsists, or is conserved. (In meaning = upholding all things by the word of His power. Heb. 1 : 3.) There too it is expressly distinguished from creation : In Him all things *were created*, . . . All things *have been created* by Him and for Him, and He Him-

self is before all things, and in Him all things *consist* (perfect tense)—*i.e.*, have stood and still stand together, or continue to exist. (3.) The verb to *stand* is used by a metaphor to denote continued existence, even in the laws of Moses, Ex. 21 : 21, and by the prophets, when speaking of our world. So in allusion to the Mosaic history of the creation. Ps. 33. "He said, and it was," it instantly existed or began to be ; "He commanded, and it *stood*," continued to exist. Ps. 119 : 90, 91. "Thou hast established the earth, and it *standeth*. They (the heaven and earth, ver. 89) *stand* unto this day." Isa. 66 : 22. "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make *shall stand* before me, saith Jehovah, so shall stand your seed and your name" (cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 13) : making or creating again distinguished from standing or conservation. (4.) The Apostle alludes to the work of the third day, or the removal of the waters from the earth : And the earth by the word of God arising, emerging or appearing, out of the deep which at first covered it, and still subsisting by means of water ; which is the life of the vegetable creation, as well as necessary for animals and men. (So our translators seem to have understood it, though their translation does not accurately express the meaning of the original.)

The sense then is : The scoffers (even if they admit that by the omnipotent will of God the earth with its atmosphere began to exist in the beginning, and that the earth on the third day of creation arose out of the water which at first covered it, and by means of which it still subsists ;) choose to ignore this clearly revealed fact—namely, that it was by this constitution of things, by reversing the order of the third day, by covering the earth again with water, that the ungodly then living were destroyed. The scoffers deny it, but the God of truth affirms it ; listen then to Him.

All things shall not continue as they are now, for the eminently impious at Christ's advent shall be destroyed by fire, and the earth renovated as the eternal home of the

righteous, vs. 7-13. So predicts Christ's prophet-apostle. Lit. *But the now heaven and the earth, by the same word, have been stored up, being kept for fire unto the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly men—i.e.,* The earth and atmosphere as now existing, by the same will and power of God, have been put in a state of perfect order and security, being kept to be subjected to the action, not of water, Gen. 9 : 11, etc., but of fire at the day of judgment, or when the time has come for the destruction of those that are eminently ungodly. And so the prophets and Paul predict. Ps. 97 : 3 ; Isa. 66 : 15, 16 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 7-9. (Notes on 1 Pet. 4 : 5.) Cf. Rev. 19 : 11-21.

Have been stored up, or treasured up : the earth with its atmosphere is like treasure admirably arranged and put in the proper storehouses. Cf. Ps. 33 : 7. The metaphor beautifully describes the perfect order and stability of our world as it now is, until the day of judgment. *The ungodly men* : in our idiom men, that are ungodly, or the eminently impious ; such as the mockers, false teachers, and their followers.

What an awful doom awaits those who, with the Bible in their hands, scoff at what God has most clearly and often revealed ! How will they meet the Lord Jesus at the day of judgment ! How irresistibly will His miraculous advent prove that He who made and upholds all things, and who in His incarnate state died for sinful men, is not the proper object of irreverent sneering and satirical contempt ! What bitter self-reproaches, what remorse and despair, what fruitless longings for annihilation ! Rev. 6 : 15-17. It is madness to drive as near as possible to the edge of a precipice, and expect to escape maiming or death ; and it is no light sin to trifle and jest about the second personal coming of the Lord and Saviour. If we "love His appearing," such jesting and trifling will be morally impossible. On the contrary, let us cultivate that disposition of mind which will make it perfectly natural for us to offer the daily prayer, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and for the accomplish-

ment of all the purposes revealed by Thy prophets and apostles.

The Apostle in this chapter mentions three forms or conditions of our world. (1.) The *Antediluvian*, which he calls the heaven and earth from of old, and the then world ; or, our world as it existed from the creation to the deluge, cf. 2 : 5, the old (ancient) world. (2.) The *Postdiluvian*, the present form of our world, which he calls the now heaven and earth ; our world as it has existed from the deluge until now, and will continue, retaining its present constitution, until Christ comes, vs. 7, 10-12. (3.) The *Renovated* form or condition of our world, from the second advent to all eternity, which he calls the new heaven and the new earth, ver. 13 ; the home of the righteous, and the realm of " Messiah the Prince," 2 Ep. 1 : 11 ; the world to come, or the future inhabited earth, of which his beloved brother Paul also speaks. Heb. 2 : 5.

For this escapes them, etc. " That by the word of God there were heavens from of old, and earth out of water and by water consisting, by which the then world, deluged with water, perished," is the logical subject ; " this" is the logical apposition, or substitute for the logical subject ; " escapes them willing," is the logical predicate, and " for" is the argumentative particle, referring to ver. 4. (See Iliad, 24, 563, 564. Cyrop. 1, 1, 3.) As to the *theories* of geologists, see Gordon's Vedder Lectures.

7. A B (according to Mai) cop sah vg Did Augustine, Jerome, by the same (*auto*) word ; C K L S Oec Thph by his (*auton*) word. The Eternal Son was no doubt the great agent in producing the deluge. See notes on 1 Pet. 3 : 18-20. But here the phrase, " the word of God," denotes the fiat or omnipotent will of God.

* But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness ; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Christ will certainly come at the appointed season, not an hour before, not an hour later, and the delay is only ap-

parent. For (1.) in the judgment of the Lord a millenium and a day are alike. He inhabiteth eternity, and there is no reason why He should hasten or delay. "God's eternity-clock," as Bengel expresses it, "differs from the hour-clock of mortals. To Him the times glide away neither more swiftly nor more slowly than befits Himself and His economy," or plan of the universe. (2.) He who gave the promise concerning the coming of Christ is immutably faithful. He cannot lie, or deceive. (3.) Jehovah has the best and most affecting reasons for the seeming delay in sending His incarnate Son the second time to our world—namely, to secure the salvation of the chosen, and to give sinners generally opportunities for repentance. (Cf. 1 Tim. 6 : 14, 15. "The appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in His own times the blessed and only potentate will show," etc. Acts 1 : 6, 7 ; 3 : 19-21 ; Mat. 24 : 3, 14 ; Rev. 11 : 15-18. Notes on Jas. 5 : 7-9.)

Lit. *Let not this one thing escape you, beloved, that one day*, etc., ver. 5. Many things must be retained, since all truth is precious, but let not this one escape your notice—namely, that time is as nothing to the Eternal. Men sicken, pine away and die, appearing as shadows moving over mountains and plains ; their best devised schemes in innumerable instances scattered as chaff before the wind, their promises as broken reeds. But He who alone hath deathlessness has eternity to work in ; who or what can hinder the accomplishment of His purposes? Time can make no change in the unchangeable God ; in His truthfulness, or in any other perfection of His nature. Lit. *The Lord is not slow in respect of the promise*, vs. 4, 13. He does not delay as to the fulfilment of it, or tarry after the appointed time. (1 Tim. 3 : 15 ; cognate adjective, Jas. 1 : 19 ; Lk. 24 : 25.) *As some deem it slowness*—i.e., the mockers, who think that Christ travels so slowly, or loiters so long in some other world or worlds, that He will never arrive and appear on earth. Cf. Mat. 24 : 48-51. *But is long-suffering to us* ; what some call slowness is real kindness on the part of God

to us, He being exceedingly patient to believers of this dispensation ; giving to the chosen the means and opportunities of obtaining salvation, ver. 15, and 1 : 10, 11. *Not desiring any to perish, but* (desiring) *all to come to repentance ;* which desire or will of God as lawgiver and moral governor is exhibited in all the means of grace ; the commands, invitations, expostulations ; and the promises to the penitent ; God in this manner simultaneously exhibiting His holiness and benevolence. Cf. Jas. 4 : 7-10. Such is the moral perfection of Jehovah that it is impossible for Him (intimated by the use of the subjective negative) to take any pleasure in the everlasting misery of intelligent beings. *The procuring cause* of such misery is not God's purpose, but their own sins. Jas. 1 : 13-15 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 12, 13 ; Rom. 9 : 22. So they are fitted for destruction. But *the absolute certainty* of the everlasting misery of those who do not repent, but persevere in rebellion against God, that depends on the Divine purpose. 2 Pet. 2 : 3-10 ; and vs. 17-22. (See notes on 1 Pet. 2 : 8.) Goodness and Justice in God are not in conflict, but in perfect harmony.

God is long-suffering to sinners of every grade while on earth, and it is unspeakable kindness on His part to warn men of the consequences of deliberate, open, and persevering disobedience to Him, and to give them means and opportunities of coming to repentance. It is a great mistake, then, to restrict God's goodness and patience to the elect. Rom. 9 : 22 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 20.

Repentance (*metanoia*) is not mere regret for past disobedience ; nor sadness in the anticipation of the consequences of evil deeds ; nor remorse, or the distress occasioned by the accusation and condemnation of one's conscience ; but sorrow for and hatred of sin, arising from love to God, and a longing after moral conformity to Him. 2 Pet. 1 : 4 ; Jas. 4 : 8-10. It is a change of the mind as to sin, and a return of the soul to God for the obtaining of holiness. Acts 20 : 21. This is the repentance God delights in, which

He enjoins in His Word, and which is becoming sinners to cherish and manifest.

Judas Iscariot regretted the past, was filled with remorse, and had an awful dread of the future, but there was in him no conversion or turning from the love of sin to the love of holiness ; but after Peter fell, such a conversion was greatly augmented. To both, when in the body on earth, the long-suffering of God was clearly shown, but while Peter had a blessed exodus from this world, Judas went to his own place in the prison of the lost. Acts 1 : 25 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 15.

8. Peter shows that Christ's promised coming does not depend on the flow of the times, but on God's eternal counsel. (See Calvin in loc.) 9. A B C S *kurios*, K L Oec Thph prefix the article, as c. t. Lord of the promise = the promised Lord ; or, the Lord from whom the promise originates. K L cop to us as c. t., B to you, A (according to T. Smith) Son your account (*di' humas*) vg. *Choreo* with *eis* = *to go into*, or *come to* that mental state denominated repentance. Cf. Mat. 15 : 17. *Me boulomenos*, not desiring, or willing. Men take delight in the anticipation of obtaining the thing desired or willed, often in the ruin of their enemies ; but there is no such malignity in God, or in Christ. Ezek. 33 : 10, 11. Whatever difficulty may be here, it cannot be removed by recurring to God's foreknowledge ; as if that were not inseparably connected with His will. God loves holiness, and delights in an humble and contrite spirit. If any practically say, Who is the Almighty that I should obey Him, they must take the consequences, present and future, with this sting in their consciences forever : God takes no pleasure in my wretchedness, but my own sins have unsheathed the sword of His justice.

Others remove the difficulty by taking these words in connection with "God is long-suffering *to us*," the chosen and sanctified : "Not desiring, or willing, that any (of us) should perish, but that all (of us) should come to repentance." So apparently Clement of Rome, as cited in the Introduction to this epistle, Estius and Beza. But the exposition above stated is more natural and unforced. See Calvin in loc.

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night ; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. ¹¹ *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of *persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversa-

tion and godliness, ¹² looking for and hasting (marg. Or, hasting the coming) unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

This paragraph is an amplification of the prediction contained in the seventh verse, with an additional one concerning the everlasting dwelling-place of the righteous.

It is not a prediction of the destruction of the material universe, of all or most of the worlds that roll in space : for the whole context shows that our world alone is spoken of ; and such an assumption is a pure conjecture, and irrational, it being impossible to conceive why these worlds should be annihilated, since they are mirrors in which the power, wisdom, and goodness of God are seen by the eye of reason. And if there are sinners only on earth and in hell, if the host of heaven worship God, Neh. 9 : 6 ; Eph. 3 : 10, then it is folly, a mere poetic fancy, to dream of " the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds ;" and a reflection on the Holy One to suppose that He would destroy their dwelling-places, and consign their holy inhabitants to nonentity. Whatever changes the Almighty may produce in the material universe, adding to the beauty of the worlds, or clothing them with more glorious robes, we need have no fear that He will annihilate these wonderful and magnificent proofs of " His eternal power and godhead."

It is not a prediction of the destruction of our whole solar system. For if there are intelligent beings in any of the planets of our system, how could the fire from the earth and sky reach them ; and how absurd to suppose that God would punish them for sins which men commit on earth ! Neither is there a word or phrase in this prophecy which intimates any such thing.

It is not a prediction of the annihilation of our world as a habitable globe : which Christ's apostle denies, or refutes, in the following manner : (1.) He declares that the works

on the earth shall be burned. Now, if the words, The earth shall be burned, mean The earth shall be destroyed as a habitable globe, how absurd to add, The works on it shall also be burned ! (2.) By contrasting the destruction of our world by the deluge with its future subjection to fire, the Apostle demonstrates that he does not refer to its annihilation, vs. 6, 7. "The then world" was not annihilated. We and other men are still living on it. (3.) The prediction in the thirteenth verse directly refutes the assumption : "But new heavens and a new earth according to His promise we expect, in which righteousness dwelleth"—*i.e.*, we expect the earth with its atmosphere to be renovated, as Jehovah promised by Isaiah. Is renovation the same thing as annihilation ? (4.) The Apostle most clearly predicts that the fire at the day of the Lord is designed, not for the annihilation of our world, but for the destruction of the eminently ungodly then living ; precisely as the deluge to the impious Antediluvians, vs. 6, 7.

It is not an allegorical prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, and of the Jewish Church-State, followed by the establishment of the Christian Church and dispensation, as Hammond supposed : nor a symbolic prediction of the doom of the wicked at Christ's advent, pictured in the destruction of Jerusalem, as T. Smith imagined. For (1.) there is not an allegory, or symbol, in the whole context ; allegories and symbols in prophetic visions being always described in the past tense—never in the future. (2.) This Origenistic mode of exegesis leads to palpable absurdity ; for if held valid as to the thirteenth verse, it must also be applied to the whole preceding context, vs. 1-12. Who and what, then, are represented by the prophets and apostles, and their writings ; and what person is designated by the Lord and Saviour ? What does His coming stand for ; and who are meant by the mockers ? What does the sleeping of the fathers signify ? Is the Creator of our world a representative of some other being ? What do the deluge and the fire portray ? And, by this

process of explaining away, can the long-suffering of the Lord have any meaning? Are God and Christ, the creation and the deluge, the day of judgment and perdition of the impious, all wild allegories, or predictions of unknowable persons and things? Is the coming of Christ a dream of a distempered imagination? If such an extravagant mode of explanation be carried out to its legitimate consequences, what becomes of Holy Scripture ; and will not the apostolic exhortations in this context be based on "airy nothings?" (3.) Hammond and T. Smith take it for granted that Peter died with Paul in the Neronian persecution ; and that this second epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem : which assumption is refuted in the Introduction. But so we would have an unintelligible series of allegorical predictions written after the event, in addition to the absurdities already suggested. (4.) Scriptural allegories are accompanied with an explanation, either express or implied. But no such key hangs at the door of this context.

But here we have, first, an amplification of the seventh verse, or a prediction of the destruction by fire from earth and heaven of the eminently impious who shall be living at the second coming of Christ. As the deluge destroyed the ungodly then living, so the fire will destroy the impious who are living at the day of judgment, or at the *parousia* of Christ, vs. 6, 7. That this is the right explanation will also be seen from a more literal and accurate translation, with a brief exposition : But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens with a rushing sound shall come near ; but the kindled elements shall be dissolved (shall be let loose), and the earth and the works on it shall be burned. All these, then, being dissolved (being let loose), what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy deportment and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the fired heavens shall be dissolved (let loose), and the kindled elements melt. But new heavens and a new earth, according

to His promise, we look for, in which righteousness dwelleth.

The certainty of Christ's coming to punish the incorrigible : *But* (whatever mockers may affirm) *the day of the Lord will come.* Called also *the day of God.* It is the time appointed by God for the personal coming of our Lord as the King and Judge of mankind, ver. 4 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 2-4, with 4 : 15-18 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 1 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 10, 11 ; 2 : 9, 10. The day in which Christ, and God in and by Him, shall reign in righteousness, and punish with justice. Acts 17 : 3 ; 3 : 19-21. And the beginning and close of the millennial dispensation, or day of judgment, will be signalized by the destruction of Christ's open, organized, and avowed enemies. Cf. notes on 1 Pet. 4 : 5, and on 2 Pet. 3 : 7.

The manner : *as a thief in the night*—i.e., suddenly and unexpectedly, causing the greatest alarm to the eminently impious. 1 Thes. 5 : 2, 3 ; Rev. 6 : 15-17.

The consequences, or means to be employed for their destruction : *In which day the heavens*, the atmosphere of our world, as in vs. 5, 7, 12, 13, *with a rushing sound shall come near* (cf. Lk. 12 : 37 ; 18 : 37), lit. *shall come alongside of*, or near the earth's surface with a loud rushing sound, as whirlwinds and detonations in volcanic eruptions ; and being *fired*, or inflamed, as in such eruptions, *shall be let loose*, to consume the impious men, like the mockers and false teachers. *The kindled elements* (solid bodies, for they only can melt) *shall be let loose* from the positions they generally occupy, and *melt* ; and so *the earth and the things on it*, the works of nature and of art, *shall be burned*—i.e., subjected to the powerful action of fire, under the direction of Christ the Lord. Cf. Isa. 2 : 10-22. Wherever on earth His implacable foes are assembled in the great day, there will He render retribution to them in flaming fire ; as Paul also predicts, in conformity with the ancient prophets. 2 Thes. 1 ; Ps. 97 ; Isa. 66 : 15, 16 ; Zech. 14 : 4, 5, 12, 13. *Shall be burned*, and so it is rendered in Eng. Vers. 1 Cor. 3 : 15 ; Mat. 13 : 30, 40 ; Acts 19 : 19. It does not mean

that the crust of the whole earth shall be burnt to ashes, for which the Apostle uses another word, 2 : 6 ; nor is the meaning that the fire will operate from the surface to the centre, making the earth a chaos or jumble of atoms ; for that is by no means necessary to burn *the works on* the earth (*en* as in 1 : 18), or to destroy *the impious* in open array against Christ on its surface. And the same earth and heaven from of old created by God, the world that was marred and laid waste by the deluge and now existing, is to be renovated as the eternal home of the righteous—not a world built of its atoms.

“ The stream,” says Dana, describing the eruption of the great volcano Kilauea Hawaaii, “ plunged into the sea with loud detonations. The burning lava, on meeting the waters, was shivered like melted glass into millions of particles which were thrown up in clouds that darkened the sky, and fell like a storm of hail over the surrounding country. Vast columns of steam and vapors rolled off before the wind, whirling in ceaseless agitation, and the reflected glare of the lavas formed a fiery firmament overhead.” (U. S. Exploring Expedition, pp. 188-192.)

“ The intense heat of the fountain and stream of lava caused an influx of cool air from every quarter. This created terrific whirlwinds, which, constantly stalking about, bid defiance to the daring visitor. These were the most dangerous of any thing about the volcano. Clouds approaching the volcano were driven back, and set moving in wild confusion.” (Letter of H. Kinney, Am. Jour. of Science, Sept. 1852, p. 258. See D. N. Lord’s *Coming and Reign of Christ*, where this whole subject is copiously and carefully examined.)

These extracts tend to elucidate the exposition given. And surely the Lord Christ, not only by volcanoes and earthquakes, but also by fire sent directly from His presence, as well as by other methods, can easily rid the world of

His implacable enemies, Zech. 14 : 12, 13 ; 14 : 1-5 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 6-8, Zech. 12 : 6-9, destroy the impious, crush the oppressor, and destroy them that corrupt the earth. Ps. 72 : 4 ; Rev. 11 : 18. This is the main design of the conflagration here described, and we must judge of the *extent* of the conflagration from the *principal design* of it, as explicitly stated in the seventh verse. Also, from the revealed fact that the day of the Lord shall not seize the godly as a thief. 1 Thes. 5 : 4.

All these things, then, being let loose, etc. Peter now speaks as if the day had come, or like an eye and ear-witness of the awful scene ; but not as a mere natural philosopher, for he throws in the midst of the sublime description an animated exhortation to holiness, and that in all modes of its manifestation towards God and men : *what manner of persons, etc.* Lit. In holy walks and pieties = in all holy deportment towards men, with the highest degree of reverence to God. What an undesigned coincidence in thought with 1 Pet. 1 : 13, as to the inseparable union of Christian hope with holiness, here presents itself to our notice ! The Apostle cannot suppress his conviction of its absolute necessity, even while describing the doom of the ungodly.

Expecting and hastening the coming of the day of God : to hasten its coming is a metaphor, indicating intense desire and love ; for that on which the heart is set we would hasten, if in our power. And they who move perpetually in all holy deportment and godliness, and so expect the great day, have set their hearts on the coming of the Lord and Saviour. They "love His appearing," long for "the restoration of all things" in this sin-cursed world, and ever pray, "The Lord hasten it in its time." (Cf. notes on 1 Pet. 1 : 13.)

We have here, in the second place, a prediction of the renovation of our world as the eternal home of the righteous : *But new heavens and a new earth, according to His promise, we look for, in which righteousness dwelleth.* (This

is the order of the original ; and it shows that the emphasis is not on *we*, as in Eng. Vers., but on the new heavens and the new earth as promised and expected.)

Heavens and *earth* mean our world with its atmosphere ; as in the whole context : the same heaven and earth that were from of old, the world that was marred and laid waste by the deluge, and still existing. The prophet-apostle does not say, We expect *another* heaven and *another* earth, rolling somewhere else in space (our world alone being named earth in Holy Scripture), but a *new* heaven and a *new* earth—*i.e.*, the earth with its atmosphere now existing, but renovated ; the substance remaining, but the properties or qualities changed for the better. *We look for*, or expect, this physical renovation of our globe, *according to His promise*, Isa. 65 : 17 ; 66 : 22 (cf. Ps. 102 : 25, 26, with Heb. 1 : 10-12), in conformity with the promise of Him who is the Lord or Jehovah, knowing well that the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets. (1 Pet. 1 : 11.) *In which* new heaven and new earth *righteousness dwelleth*, or ever abides. Now, righteousness is a quality of the mind, and has no existence apart from beings that are intelligent : it is unquestionably a metonymy of the quality for the persons in whom the quality exists ; “ righteousness ” for the righteous, as “ the circumcision ” for the circumcised. Rom. 4 : 9.

But when, or at what great epoch, did the Apostle and those addressed expect this physical renovation of our world as the everlasting home of the righteous ? At the *parousia*, or second personal coming of Christ, as is evident from the preceding and subsequent context, vs. 1-12, and ver. 14. (Cf. Isa. 66 : 22, with vs. 14-16 ; and these verses with 2 Thes. 1 : 5-9.)

Some explain the passages of Isaiah before referred to as a prediction of a change of dispensation from the Mosaic to the Christian, in which the church was as it were to be re-created. But this is untenable : for (1.) it violates the invariable law of the simile. “ For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall stand before me,

saith Jehovah, so shall stand your seed and your name''—*i.e.*, As the renovated earth and its atmosphere which I intend to make shall exist forever (standing before Jehovah), so shall your descendants and your name be forever continued on it. (2.) Peter evidently understood Jehovah's promise of the physical renovation of our world ; as before shown. (3.) This way of explaining the prophet makes the Apostle write nonsense : We expect hereafter to enjoy the benefits of the Christian dispensation, as the Lord promised by Isaiah ; as if Peter and the disciples addressed were not then living in the Christian dispensation and had not as yet enjoyed its benefits !

Others say that the new heavens and the new earth mean the renovated material universe ; but that mode of explanation does violence to the usage of the words in this chapter, in which they refer to our world alone ; which has been before demonstrated.

Others explain the new heavens and the new earth of heaven—*i.e.*, the present home of disembodied saints. But this is "to bring a sense to Scripture, not to take one from it ;" for *this heaven*, or paradise of the sinless departed, is *never* spoken of in Scripture by the name Earth, with descriptive adjectives, such as old and new. Christ's apostle evidently predicts that our renovated world, from the time of the Parousia, is to be the everlasting home of the righteous ; their home when glorified with Christ, 1 : 11, and in their complete nature, 1 Pet. 1 : 7, 13 ; 4 : 13 ; 5 : 4 ; cf. Rom. 8 : 17-23 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 10-21.

10. A B S sah vg Did Augustine as a thief ; C K L Thph Oec add in the night. Cf. 1 Thes. 5 : 2. *Katakaesetai*, kata is intensive, as in 2 Pet. 2 : 7 ; 3 : 13 ; Jas. 1 : 23, = shall be burned (Dutch N. T. zullen verbranden), which is the reading of most of the manuscripts and versions. B K S sah have *heurethesetai*, the earth and the works on it *shall be found*—*i.e.*, they shall not be annihilated. The authorities for this reading are weighty, still it savors of an exegetical note : am Thph omit but the earth and the works on it shall be burned. 11. A K L S vg then, *oun* ; B C sah thus, *houtos*. We take *luomenon* as the pres. part. pas. But the sense is not altered whether we say dissolvable

—*i.e.*, dissolution is inherent in them, or whether they are spoken of in the prophetic present as dissolved, or let loose.

12. A B K L S melt (present tense), C vg shall melt. S is singular in omitting and hastening. To explain *elements* of the stars or heavenly worlds, is perfectly arbitrary, and repugnant to the whole context. *By reason of which* (cf. 2 : 2), or in consequence of which "coming of the day of God." 13. B C K L according to his promise, S Augustine according to his promises, A am sah and his promises. If *ouranoi* in this whole context were rendered *heaven*, it would be better for the English reader.

The physical renovation of our world by Jehovah-Jesus will be very speedily accomplished, which is intimated by the verb used : "Behold, I *create* a new heaven and a new earth." Isa. 65 : 17 ; cf. notes on 2 Pet. 3 : 5-7. But nothing that we are aware of is revealed as to the manner of effecting it.

¹⁴ Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. ¹⁵ And account *that* the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation ; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you ; ¹⁶ as also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things ; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. ¹⁷ Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. ¹⁸ But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and forever. Amen.

Concluding Exhortations. 1. Prepare diligently for His coming. Lit. Wherefore beloved, looking for these things, be diligent in order to be found by Him spotless and unblamed, in peace.

Looking for (both a temporal and a causal participle)—*i.e.*, while expecting and since ye do so. *These things* : not only the destruction of the impious at Christ's appearing, but also and especially an everlasting residence with your Lord and Saviour in our renovated world. *Be diligent*, be in earnest in cultivating all Christian virtues, *that* when He comes *ye may be found by Him* as undefiled disciples—not

spots and blemishes, 2 : 13 ; that ye may meet with His approbation, not His withering rebuke, and live eternally *in peace*, or in a state of perfect blessedness. (Notes on Jas. 3 : 18.) Cf. 1 : 5-21 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 13, etc ; 1 Jno. 2 : 28.

2. Account the long-suffering of our Lord salvation ; since this is in conformity with the doctrine of our beloved brother Paul, who is truly an inspired apostle ; who also agrees with us as to Christ's 'Parousia and the design of it, although there are some difficulties with respect to these topics in his epistles, the meaning of which is perverted by some to their own perdition.

And deem the long-suffering of our Lord salvation—i.e., the primal source or cause of it, (a metonymy of the effect for the author or cause ; cf. Acts. 4 : 12 ; Heb. 5 : 9), as also our beloved brother Paul (our brother as an apostle) according to the wisdom given him wrote unto you. Unto you : Paul wrote to the Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians living in Asia Minor. And those epistles most clearly exhibit the love of God and of Christ, their long-suffering, grace, and mercy, as the alone fountain of salvation ; which is the only thing that Peter here affirms. Cf. 1 Pet. 5 : 12. Deem it, not slowness or tardiness as the mockers, but loving patience on the part of Christ our Lord. The wisdom given Paul means the inspiration divinely bestowed, appearing in the epistles before named ; his profound and comprehensive knowledge of the Gospel and of the purposes of God, revealed to him by the Spirit of Christ. Cf. Eph. 1 : 8-10 ; 3 : 1-11 ; Col. 1 : 25-28, with Gal. 1 : 11, 12.

While calling Paul his beloved brother, Peter could not have forgotten what is written, Gal. 2 : 11-21 ; which shows in a perfectly artless manner that Peter was the real author of this epistle, and that his heart was free from envy, false ambition, and belittling pride, or that he had not a particle of the spirit of a pope ; and that he meekly received a pungent and public reproof from his brother in office, and loved him the more for his fidelity.

As also he wrote in all the epistles—i.e., according to the wisdom given him, and that also in all the epistles not directly addressed to you. Peter, an undoubted apostle, in whom Christ wrought effectually among the Jews, Gal. 2 : 8, here puts Paul's Epistles in the Canon of the New Testament, stamping them all with the seal of his inspired approbation. *Speaking in them, in the epistles not primarily addressed to you, about these things—i.e., Christ's coming and the great ends to be effected thereby, in which (among which topics) are some things hard to be understood.* Not all, but some ; not impossible to understand and explain, but difficult. What things are intended ? Not the nature and extent of human duty, not the mode of a sinner's acceptance with God, not the decree of God as to the certain and glorious salvation of the chosen and sanctified at the day of the Lord ; but the reference is to the principal subjects of this second epistle, and especially to *the order of the succession* of the events that are to precede, accompany and follow the coming of our Lord—*e.g.*, 1 Cor. 15 : 20-28 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 1-12. In our judgment, the great leading predicted facts stand out prominently on the prophetic and apostolical paintings or descriptions of the great day ; and these are easy to be understood, if honestly interpreted according to the laws of language and of symbols. (See Christocracy, or Essays on the Coming and Kingdom of Christ.) But to group them in the right order is a difficult matter. Herein a careful collation of parallel passages is necessary, with long-continued patient attention, and fervent prayer. But those who are enlightened by God will understand what others deem unintelligible, or will not give heed to and keep in their hearts. 1 : 19 ; Dan. 12 : 10.

Which the unlearned and unestablished wrest, as also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction, or perdition : apostasia, as in 2 : 3. Which difficult passages in Paul's Epistles the unlearned and unestablished, or those who are ignorant of the prophecies relating to the Messiah, unlearned in those revelations from God, and not fixed in the love of

truth and holiness, 2 : 14 ; 1 : 12 ; 3 : 17, *wrest* or torture—*i.e.*, they put these passages on the rack of their intellect, not to discover and explain the truths contained in them, but to make them express what they wish—what will agree with their own preconceived opinions. This is the evident meaning of the metaphor. *As also* they wrest the other Scriptures, Prophetic and Apostolic. But this is a very sinful and dangerous business, since it tends to *their own perdition*, or their everlasting ruin : which is an awful warning, and should lead all who handle the Scriptures, whether privately or officially, to cultivate docility and reverence, or to receive the unadulterated word of truth in the love of it. 2 Thes. 2 : 10.

Paul's agreement with Peter as to the leading topics of this second epistle, is unquestionable. As to Christ's *parousia*, for the destruction of the impious and the salvation of believers, see the Epistles to the Thessalonians. As to the necessity of growth in holiness, in order to enter into His everlasting kingdom, Rom. 8 : 4-16. With respect to the punishment of false teachers, Phil. 3 : 2, 18, 19. As to the renovation of our world as the scene or home of the future glorification of God's children with Christ, compare Rom. 8 : 17-23 ; and Heb. 2 : 5, with 1 : 6, Gr., and vs. 8-12.

3. Be on your guard lest, hurried away by the delusion of the lawless, ye fall from your steadfastness ; but grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

As for you (the pronoun being emphatic and appearing first in the sentence), *therefore, beloved, since ye know beforehand, beware* (watch yourselves, or be on your guard) *lest, carried away with the error of the lawless, ye fall from your own steadfastness.* The duty enjoined : Do not fall from your steadfastness—*i.e.*, do not lose your conviction or firm persuasion of the necessity of adhering to truth and holiness. Let your faith, hope, and love be steadfast ;

established, or deeply fixed in your hearts. The manner or means of performing the duty : By being self-vigilant, or not allowing yourselves at any time to be carried away by the error or delusion of the lawless—never led along with an ungodly multitude.

True believers enter by faith into the fortress of God's power, 1 Pet. 1 : 5, but that power not only works around them, but in them, and hence they are and ever must be on their guard against the seductive influence of error and sin. Cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 22, 23 ; 4 : 14, with Eph. 3 : 20 ; Col. 1 : 29. This constant vigilance is necessary as a means to perseverance in truth and holiness, for in no other way can we walk towards and enter into the kingdom. 1 : 10, 11, 12. Such exhortations are not designed to throw a doubt over the certain salvation of the sanctified, or the predictions and promises that foreshow it, but to correct slothfulness and arouse to perpetual activity. (See Calvin in loc.) Cf. Phil. 3 : 13, 14 ; 2 : 27-30 ; 2 : 12, 13. The motive : Lit. *knowing before*, a causal participle, as in 3 : 3, = since ye know (the danger) beforehand ; since by the leading topics of this epistle ye are forewarned, ye ought to be forearmed. Beware lest, etc., inasmuch as ye now know the characteristics and final doom of false teachers and mockers, and that of their many followers, as well as the glorious rewards to be obtained in Christ's everlasting kingdom.

Carried away with, or *led away by* : a metaphor, as some think, derived from the rush of a torrent, by which one suddenly falls and is borne along ; or (which we prefer) from a person hurried along with and by a crowd (Gal. 2 : 13, where the same verb occurs), so that suddenly he *falls from* (another metaphor) his upright position, or retains not a steadfast foothold. False teachers and scoffers with their disciples are denoted by *the lawless* ; and *the error* is both theoretical and practical, or a constant wandering from truth and duty.

The prohibition or negative precept is followed by the

positive : *But grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* : Increase in those gracious endowments or virtues of which our Lord is the author, and by that knowledge of which He is the object. 1 : 3-12 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 1-3. *Grace*, a metonymy of the efficient cause for the effects ; *knowledge*, a metonymy of the effect for the instrumental cause, or means of growing in grace—to wit, the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures. 1 : 19 ; 3 : 2. Christian steadfastness and growth in grace and knowledge are inseparable. Truth and holiness in the heart are like light and heat in the beams of the sun.

To Him the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. Here the Apostle worships Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour as truly God, as God in flesh ; as the great author of our present holiness and future bliss, as of right deserving our supreme gratitude, and our eternal adoration. Cf. Rom. 9 : 5 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 22.

At the *parousia* of our Lord, *the day of eternity* will dawn on our world, 1 : 19 ; 3 : 13 ; Eph. 2 : 7 ; 3 : 21, Gr. ; Rev. 11 : 15, the day of the revelation of His glory, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all that believed. 1 Pet. 4 : 13 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 10.

What thanksgiving will flow from our lips, what delightful and ever-glowing love will be in our hearts, when we see Christ as He is, and are like Him in body and mind ; when we dwell in the new heavens and the new earth, wholly freed from the curse of the fall, where there will be no tempter, no false teachers and mockers, no sickness, pain, or death ; when we shall obtain gladness unspeakable and glorified, and eternal ages constitute the day in which we, without sin and without weariness, shall serve our Lord and Saviour, partaking of the honors, employments, and enjoyments of His everlasting kingdom ! “ He who testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. So be it. Come, Lord Jesus.”

14. B C S *amometoi*, A *amomoi*. *By Him*, dative of the agent. Cf.

Jas. 3 : 7. *In peace* : others explain, In peace of conscience, or In peace with mankind. But *peace* here, like *shalom*, means complete bliss, 1 Pet. 5 : 14, and *in peace* is = in a state of perfect bliss ; which includes the other explanations. 15, 16. *As our beloved brother Paul*, etc. Neander tells us that it is unsuitable for one apostle thus to refer to the writings of another. (Planting and Training, etc.) And why ? because the apostles call the Old Testament Scripture or Scriptures. True, but does it follow from this that they did not consider their own writings also inspired of God, and hence equally deserving of the name Scripture ? It does not ; for Paul claims inspiration for himself as pointedly as it is here ascribed to him by Peter. Gal. 1 : 11, 12 ; Eph. 1 : 9, 10 ; 3 : 3-11 ; 1 Thes. 4 : 8, 15, etc. ; 1 Cor. 14 : 37. Now, if it was not unsuitable for Paul to claim inspiration for himself, how can it be unsuitable for Peter, in opposition to false teachers and scoffers, to give his testimony to a fact so evident and unquestionable ? And how could he do it better than by speaking of Paul's Epistles as Scripture ? 16. K L S Thph Oec in all the epistles, A B C omit the article : C K L Photius Oec in which (things), *en hois*, A B S Thph in which (epistles), *en hais*. We prefer the former reading, but the translation should be *in which*. 17. *Also*, in the English Version, should be erased, since there is nothing corresponding to it in the Greek. 18. A C K L S have *amen*, but not B. Others translate, *Grow in the grace and knowledge*, etc. ; which is better than "in grace and (in) the knowledge," etc., for it is not certain that *in* should be supplied. Perhaps, the following is more accurate : *Grow in grace and (that) by the knowledge*, etc. Dative of manner. But however translated, the sense is as above stated.

THE
FIRST EPISTLE
OF
JOHN.

INTRODUCTION.

The Author. That this epistle was written by the Apostle John, is unquestionable ; the external and internal evidence of the fact being clear, abundant, and perfectly convincing. Accordingly, it has ever been received as John's by the Church Universal.

The Persons addressed. There is nothing either in the epistle itself, or in the testimonies of the ancients, that can lead to any certainty in this particular. We must be content with probable conjectures, or remain undecided in the matter. Augustine indeed (Quaest. Evang. 2, 39, followed by Cassiodorus and Bede) says that it was written *to the Parthians*. And Fausset adheres to that opinion. But the testimony of Augustine, even if genuine, comes too late (towards the close of the fourth century), and is not supported by earlier writers, who are wholly silent concerning it. Besides, the phrase in Augustine, *To the Parthians*, is probably a mistake or interpolation of a transcriber ; and the corrections proposed by Whiston (*pros parthous*, a contraction for *pros parthenous* = to the virgins), and others (*pros tons diasparsamenous*, to the dispersed, in Latin, *ad sparsos*), are by no means satisfactory. Lücke. Int. c. 3.

Œcumenius supposes that it was written to Jewish and Gentile Christians, or to believers in general ; and so he accounts for its having no formal inscription or salutation. It is indeed an encyclical letter, but even such a letter must be sent at first to some particular church or churches, in order to ascertain its genuineness, and to facilitate its transmission to others.

We agree with those who hold that it was originally addressed to the churches in Asia Minor, or sent at first to them (Rev. 1 : 11); since Ephesus was, according to the testimony of Irenæus, 3 : 3, the latter residence of John, and because he addresses the readers as persons well known : not the obscurest hint anywhere appearing that it is addressed to strangers. But if it had been originally designed for Parthians, or any others beyond the region where John then labored, such a fact would have been stated either at the beginning or the conclusion of the letter.

Style and mental characteristics of the author. John has many peculiarities as a writer, but he is especially distinguished for the simplicity of his expressions, the use of but few connective particles, the positive and negative statements of a proposition, and his fondness for the words, "life" and "light," with their opposites, in various peculiar combinations. Also, by his description of the Eternal Son as the Word, or the Word of God, Rev. 19 : 13; and by his sudden transitions from the Father to the Son. But while the words are all plain and easily understood, the thoughts are exceedingly profound. This fact, together with the generally hidden links of his chain of thought, creates the principal difficulty in interpreting his first epistle.

The repetitions, which appear more frequently in this epistle than in his other writings, cannot be intelligently accounted for by an imaginary decay of the Apostle's mental faculties (no traces of which appear in the letter), but they originate from the peculiar plan which has been adopted—namely, a presentation of the same great topic under two different aspects : Our relation to God, as determined by true Communion with Him, and with His Son Jesus Christ ; and our relation to God, as determined by unfeigned Childship : which will more clearly appear from the subsequent analysis.

Paul's mind was chiefly logical, or analytical and argumentative. Hence he delights in proving his theses, and refuting opponents, and even his exhortations are generally

a chain of connected reasoning. But John, deeply contemplative, for the most part enunciates his propositions as first truths, or fundamental facts of our most holy faith. In James, the imagination was the predominant faculty, in Paul the "reason discursive," in John the "reason intuitive." But the Holy Spirit, in making them infallible as teachers, did not alter the natural structure of their minds, but spoke and wrote by them in perfect conformity with that mental structure : and so with the other sacred writers, whether prophets or apostles.

The marks of an almost feminine tenderness or softness, which some imagine, do not appear in the epistle ; and there is no sign in it of any indulgence to error and sin, but both are very sharply reproved. The disciple whom Jesus loved certainly had love to the brethren, and that in an eminent degree ; but it was a love inseparably connected with the truth, and manifested on account of their receiving and obeying it. Cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 22, 23, with 2 and 3 Jno ; 1 Jno. 2 : 18, etc. ; 4 : 1, etc.

Of the place and date nothing can be certainly determined. It may have been composed at Ephesus, or elsewhere in Asia Minor ; but it seems certain that it was written and sent to the disciples some time after his gospel was published ; for 1 Jno. 1 : 1-4, as the briefer statement concerning the Eternal Word presupposes the more copious one, Jno. 1 : 1-18, as already known. (The most probable date is between A.D. 80 and 90.) And there are plain allusions to his gospel in this epistle. 1 : 1, 2 ; 2 : 8, 25 ; 3 : 1. So at least it seems to us.

The Occasion of writing it seems to have been furnished by the rise of Docetic errorists and Antinomian Gnostics, or rather by their forerunners, men who even then began to deny the incarnation of the Eternal Word, and who made the subjective certainty of salvation to depend, not on a faith working by love and obedience, but on a mere intellectual assent to their foolish and blasphemous speculations. 1 : 6 ; 2 : 18, 19, 29 ; 4 : 1, etc.

Its Chief Design, as stated by the Apostle himself, is to teach us how we may know that we have communion with God and with Christ, are indeed His children, and have eternal life, and so to promote our highest Christian joy. 1 : 3, 4 ; 5 : 13.

*Analysis of the Epistle.**

I. *Exordium*, or Proem, concerning *the Manifestation of the Eternal Word, the Reality of His Incarnation as attested by the Apostles, with the Design of that Testimony.* 1-4.

II. *Principal topics* : A. *God is Light, and they who have Communion with Him and with His Son Jesus Christ, walk in the light.* So the Incarnate Son has declared, and this is necessary to meet with His approbation at His personal advent. 1 : 5 ; 2 : 28.

§ 1. Walking in the light and consequent communion with God presuppose that we discern and acknowledge our relation to Him as transgressors, or that we confess our sins and trust in the propitiation and intercession of His Son Jesus Christ for forgiveness and sanctification. 1 : 6-2 : 2.

§ 2. Walking in the light and consequent communion with God cannot exist without a true knowledge of Him, united with love, which is manifested by keeping His commandments, and especially the commandment to love one another. 2 : 3-11.

§ 3. All true believers congratulated as persons walking in the light and having communion with God and Christ : or, as those whose sins are forgiven, as knowing the Father and the Eternal Word, and as conquerors of Satan. 2 : 12-14.

§ 4. Walking in the light and consequent communion with God presuppose love and obedience ; but love to the Father and the doing of His will are wholly incompatible with supreme love to the world. 2 : 15-17.

§ 5. There can be no communion with the Son and with the Father, no joy or honor at Christ's *parousia*, if we give

* This analysis agrees in the main with that given by Alford, Lücke, and Braune.

heed to antichrists, and deliberately reject what God has revealed, and especially concerning Jesus as the Christ. 2 : 18-28. Communion with God without faith, or an unwavering confidence in His veracity, is impossible.

B. The same principal topic, presented under a different aspect :

God is righteous, and he that doeth righteousness is a child of God by regeneration and adoption. 2 : 29 ; 5 : 5.

§ 1. The greatness of the Father's love in adoption, the time of its full manifestation, and the holy tendency of our hope in Christ concerning it. 3 : 1-3.

§ 2. Sin is lawlessness. But Christ was manifested to take away our sins ; and he that knoweth and believeth in Christ as the Redeemer abstains from sinning. The doing of sin, then, is the mark of the children of the devil, but the doing of righteousness is the characteristic of the children of God. 3 : 4-10.

§ 3. Love to the brethren is a special manifestation of righteousness, and a sure proof of regeneration, while hatred to them is a demonstration of spiritual death. 3 : 10-15.

§ 4. A description of unfeigned brotherly love, and an exhortation to the cultivation of that love. 3 : 16-24.

§ 5. Righteousness is also exhibited by adhering to God's revelation concerning the Christ, and by testing and rejecting those who pretend to be inspired. 4 : 1-6. The children of God believe what the Father has revealed concerning the Son, and oppose and expose those who deny it ; which is an integral part of righteousness.

§ 6. Love to Him who is love, who sent His Son as the Redeemer and Saviour of men, is an evident proof of regeneration by the Spirit. This love is connected with a confession of Jesus as the Son of God, with love to the brethren, and, by a careful imitation of Christ, excludes slavish fear. 4 : 7-21.

§ 7. Faith in Jesus as the Christ, love to God and to the

brethren, joyful obedience to the Divine precepts, and victory over the world, are all forms or manifestations of righteousness and characteristic of the genuine children of God. 5 : 1-5.

C. *The Divine Testimony concerning Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, who came by water and blood.* This testimony is received by the believer, but rejected by the unbeliever. The one has eternal life, the other is destitute of it. 5 : 6-12.

III. *Conclusion : 13-21.* In which the Apostle states once more the main design of his writing, speaks of a believer's confident approach to God by prayer, and of its efficacy.

He also opens the most delightful sources of consolation, arising from his infallible knowledge as a legate of Christ—namely, that every regenerated child of God perseveres in holiness, and is not, like all the unrenewed, in the power of Satan ; but has received from the Son of God a faculty of spiritual discernment whereby he obtains a knowledge of God in and by the Son, who is the true God and Eternal Life.

His last words are an affectionate warning against idolatry.

It thus appears that the epistle is not a jumble of exhortations, but has a clear arrangement of most important subjects, expressed in a manner peculiar to the disciple whom Jesus loved.

COMMENTARY.

CHAPTER I

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life ; ² (for the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us ;) ³ that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us : and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

Here we have a description of *the Manifestation of the Eternal Word, the apostolic testimony to the Reality of His Incarnation, with the Design of that testimony, and the Apostle's scope in writing the epistle.*

The second verse is a further explication of the first, showing how He who is Eternal could be seen, beheld, and handled—namely, because of His manifestation in our nature. The third verse is a resumption of the leading points of the first, in order to introduce the great design of the apostolic testimony. There is no confusion, then, in the grammatical structure of the proem. And the order of the whole may be rightly designated as intensely devotional ; an order suggested by the adoring love of the writer to the Redeemer : That wonderful Being who existed from eternity with the Father, the Word, the Life, of whose Incarnation we have the most indubitable evidence, Him we declare unto you.

The relative pronoun, five times used in vs. 1, 3, in Eng. Vers., "that which" and "which," should be rendered *that which* = that being who. Cf. 2 : 13, 14 ; 3 : 5 ; 5 : 4, with ver. 18, Gr. The neuter is used to designate the dignity of the being spoken of. Cf. Jno. 6 : 37, 39, with ver. 40, Gr. In the first verse in Eng. Vers., as often, the distinction between the perfect and aorist is disregarded. Lit. That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld (or, gazed upon), and our hands handled ; (we are speaking) concerning the Word, the Life—and the Life was manifested, and we have seen and do testify and declare unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us—that which we have seen and have heard we declare unto you, in order that ye also may have communion with us : and indeed our communion (is) with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write unto you, in order that your joy may be full.

The subject is indicated by the preposition *peri* = about, or concerning. See Lk. 13 : 1 ; 1 Thes. 1 : 9, Gr. We are speaking *concerning the Word, the Life*. THE WORD is not the Gospel ; for that was not the Eternal Life with the Father, as is abundantly evident from the first chapter of John's gospel, but the Great Revealer of God, and of His counsels. Jno. 1 : 18. (Word is used by a meotnymy of the effect for the agent. And as words make known our thoughts and will, so the Word discloses to us the thoughts and counsels of God.)

I. What is here declared concerning the Word by the inspired writer? 1. His eternal existence as God with the Father. *That which was from the beginning—i.e., that Being who existed from eternity.* Cf. Jno. 1 : 1, 2 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 13, 14 ; 5 : 20. So in Prov. 8 : 23, "from the beginning" is equivalent to "before the earth was," and "from eternity." Cf. 2 Thes. 2 : 13. As Paul expresses it, "He

himself is before all things," or the Eternal. He who is Eternal is the True God ; but the Word is Eternal, therefore He is the True God. 5 : 20. And since there is but One God, the Word is one in essence or substance with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The Word, *the Life* : the genitive of apposition or explanation ; in our idiom the Word who is the Life—*i.e.*, essentially and efficiently : and so it is explained by Bengel, Alford, and Fausset. (Life, a metonymy of the abstract for the concrete—*i.e.*, the Life for the Living One.) His oneness in essence with the Father is thus clearly intimated, since there is but One who is the Life, or absolutely living and life-giving. In his gospel the apostle says : In Him was life ; or, as the Sinaitic manuscript has it, In Him is life : Life in Him, as in a fountain ; original, independent, and inexhaustible. But with Jehovah alone is the fountain of life. Ps. 36 : 9. The Word, then, is Jehovah, the Living One, and the Lifegiver.

The Eternal Life which was with the Father : that Eternal Living Being who existed with the Father. So the personal distinction between Him and the Father is clearly stated. In essence the Word and the Father are *one*, but personally considered He is *with* the Father. "The Word was *God*. The same was in the beginning *with* God."

In the Godhead there is a oneness or sameness as to the essence, substance, or nature, but a threeness as to the persons, or mode of existence. The fact of eternal relations or distinctions in the divine nature, is revealed ; in what those relations or distinctions consist, is not revealed. And since God alone knows Himself perfectly, we must either receive what He has revealed concerning the manner of His existence, or make an idol of our own brain the object of homage and adoration.

2. His manifestation in the flesh, and the apostolic testimony to the reality of His incarnation. *And the Life was manifested—i.e.*, the Living One appeared in the flesh, or in human nature. "The Word became flesh." That One

was manifested, etc. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, etc., 3 : 5, 8. To be manifested = to come in the flesh. 4 : 2 ; cf. 1 Tim 3 : 16. *The Eternal Life which was with the Father was manifested to us* apostles. The manifestation is the consequence of the incarnation. He first laid hold of the seed of Abraham, and then appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh. Heb. 2 : 16 ; Rom. 8 : 3, with Lk. 1 : 31-35.

A mistake as to the reality of His human nature is impossible, since it was fully proved to us the apostles by the evidence of our external senses, and that for more than three years, while we were His constant companions. That Eternal Word who was manifested in the flesh *we have heard*, we have often listened to His instructions, and the tones of His voice still linger in our ears ; Him *we have seen with our own eyes*, and His form and countenance are still vividly impressed on our memory ; Him *we beheld*, looked at, not occasionally and with transient glances, but steadily, while He dwelt with us on earth, when *our hands handled*, or touched His body, before His crucifixion and after His resurrection ; so that we are absolutely certain that He who existed from eternity with the Father appeared to us, not as a phantasm or in an ethereal dress, but truly clothed with our nature.

3. This Theanthropos, or God manifested in flesh, is the Son of God Jesus Christ. Vs. 3, 7 ; 3 : 8 ; 4 : 9, 10, 14 ; Jno. 1 : 18.

4. It is declared that the Eternal Word and the man Christ Jesus are not two persons, but one person. Also, that the personality of the Theanthropos is in His divine nature ; the human nature being taken into subsistence with Himself, and never existing separately, or apart from the divine nature : "That which was from the beginning, the Word, the Life, the Eternal Life which was with the Father, was manifested to us." Our Redeemer, then, is

the God-man, with two distinct natures in one person ; and so He will exist forever.

5. In the incarnation of the Eternal Word there was a union of two natures in His one person, but no change whatever in the essential properties of either nature. The manifestation of Himself was by His human nature in time, which nature was visible and tangible, and had no existence until He assumed it ; but His divine nature is invisible, intangible, and eternal. His human soul grew in knowledge, but his Godhead is omniscient. His body is not omnipresent, but His divine nature is. If the divine nature could lose its attributes, it would cease to be ; and so of the human nature. " Confessedly great is the mystery of godliness : God was manifest in the flesh."

The incarnation of the Eternal Word is the great leading doctrine of Christianity, and the corner-stone of divine revelation. And they who deny that Jesus Christ is the Eternal Son in our nature, are, according to the Apostle, antichrists, even if they pretend to be inspired. 2 : 18-23 ; 4 : 1-6.

The incarnation of the Eternal Word was not imperfect and incomplete, to be gradually developed and consummated in individual men, in the church, or in the race, as various pantheists assume ; but perfect, absolutely unique, occurring but once, and relating to the Son of God alone.

If ever a philosophy was vain and deceitful, monstrous and blasphemous, Pantheism is such. And to employ it as an exposition of the relation of God to the world, of the incarnation of our Lord, or of any other Scriptural doctrine, is moral blindness akin to insanity. For that misnamed philosophy assumes without a grain of proof the oneness of God with the universe. Its adherents virtually maintain that there is but one being ; that every thing which exists is only an emanation, or outflowing of the divine essence, a form or mode in which that essence shows itself ; that this one being is either an infinite eternal nonentity or at first unconscious (as their Hindoo masters taught), and becomes

conscious only in men, in Christ, or in the church, the assembly of the sanctified. It seems, then, according to the Pantheists or Monists, that an unconscious being, in an everlasting progress of self-development (which is inconceivable and impossible), is that chimera which they call God.

They who hold our Lord to be a mere created being ; they who suppose, like Noetus and Swedenborg, that the Father was manifested in the flesh ; they who think that there are no eternal distinctions or persons in the Godhead, like Sabellius ; and they who hold that our Lord was but one, an eminent one indeed, yet but one of many emanations of an inconceivable unconscious something or nothing ; are unmistakably refuted by this poem of Christ's apostle.

Paul begins his Epistle to the Romans by declaring that *the Theanthropos Jesus Christ is the great subject* of the Gospel of God ; the Gospel as set forth by His interpreters, the prophets and apostles. John indeed is peculiar in *using but once* the word *gospel*, Rev. 14 : 6, for which he has "the testimony of God concerning His Son," 1 Jno. 5 ; cf. 1 Cor. 2 : 1, "His word" and "the truth ;" but here he describes the great subject of the Gospel as clearly and unmistakably as Paul.

II. Why are the apostles so earnest and careful in giving their testimony to the reality of our Redeemer's incarnation? *In order that ye also, who have never seen or heard Him, may have communion with us apostles, and indeed our communion is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

Our communion, fellowship or association, is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ as mutual friends. The Apostle uses the word church in his third epistle, where it is applied to a single congregation of believers ; also in Rev. 1, 2, 3, not in his gospel. But here, without using the word, he gives us the true idea of the church : The

holy Catholic Apostolical Church consists of those who are the friends of God and the lovers of Christ : All who so profess constitute the visible universal church ; but the invisible universal church, invisible to men but perfectly known to God, includes all that are sanctified, and them alone ; for they only can have communion with God and with His Son.

As to *the nature* of this communion : It consists mainly in mutual love, or holy friendship. God's love in Christ resting on us as its objects, and God in Christ being the supreme object of our adoring love and gratitude. " The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God." Jno. 16 : 27. See 1 Jno. 4 : 9, 10 ; 5 : 1.

The Father's love to us is shown by giving and sending His Son for our redemption ; the Son's, by consenting to become incarnate and die for that end, and by being now our advocate with the Father. Also, by revealing to us the whole counsel and will of God as to our salvation : hence He calls us His friends. Jno. 15 : 13-15. Our love is shown by obeying Christ, and walking in the light as God is in the light.

Believing prayer, or a confident approach to the Father in the name of Christ, is an integral part of this communion or holy friendship, but not the whole of it. Jno. 16 : 23, 24 ; 1 Jno. 5 : 14, 15.

The Spirit is not here mentioned, because He is the great agent working in our hearts, and so producing within us love to the Father and to the Son Jesus Christ. Without His efficient operations, we would be wholly unmeet for such communion. 2 : 20, 27 ; 3 : 24 ; 4 : 13. But further remarks are needless, since the main divisions of the epistle are designed to illustrate this subject, showing how we have communion with God in Christ as His friends and children.

Friendship with God becomes possible and certain only through or because of the incarnation of the Son for man's redemption. That is *the foundation* of the communion on

the part of the Father. So the insurmountable barrier raised by our sins between us and the Holy One, has been removed. Cf. 2 Cor. 5 : 18-21. Unwavering faith in God as propitious to us in Christ, is the basis of the communion on our part. 2 : 2 ; 4 : 16 ; 5 : 9-12.

And *the scope* of this epistle is to teach us *how we may know* that we have communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ ; are indeed His children, and have eternal life, 5 : 13, *in order that our joy may be fulfilled, or be full—i.e.*, that our hearts may be like a cup or fountain, filled and overflowing with holy joy ; joy like that which we will have at our Redeemer's advent. 2 : 28 ; 3 : 2 ; 4 : 17 ; Jno. 16 : 20-22 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 8, 9 ; 4 : 13.

“ Many are saying, Who will cause us to see good ?
Jehovah, lift upon us the light of thy countenance.”

1. At the end of this verse there is an omission of *we are speaking* as is clear from ver. 3.

2. *For* the Life, etc. : *kai* is = *and, also*, and sometimes *even*, in which cases it may be called *kai* explicative ; like the corresponding Hebrew copulative, which Nordheimer thinks is a fragment of the substantive verb, meaning that is. So only can *for* in Eng. Vers. be justified : *even the Life was manifested*.

3. *And indeed* : see on 2 Pet. 1 : 5. *To have communion with us, with the Father*, etc. ; meta with the genitive, as in Sept. Job 34 : 8.

4. A C K cop vg your joy ; B L S syr sah our joy (*i.e.*, the joy of us all who have communion with the Father and with the Son), which we prefer. *These things* : the reference is to the poem, and the rest of the epistle.

* This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

The great object of saving faith and knowledge having been described in the poem (cf. Jno. 17 : 3), as the foundation of our communion with God ; the Apostle now enters upon.

A. *The First Main Division of the Epistle*, 1 : 5-2 : 28,

in which the leading thought is, *God is light, and they who have communion with Him, and with His Son Jesus Christ, walk in the light.*

Lit. And this is the message which we have heard from Him, and declare again unto you, etc. *The message—i.e., the message brought, the announcement or authoritative declaration ; here in the form of doctrine, but in 3 : 11, of precept. From Him, from the Son of God, that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us. Declare again, announce again or report, is the strict meaning, and so the verb is used. Jno. 5 : 15 ; 16 : 13-15 ; Acts 16 : 38 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 12.*

Surely, a message from Him, containing the substance of His instructions concerning God, and reported to us by the disciple whom He loved, ought to be received by us with the utmost docility and reverence ; for He who was with God, and was God, must know perfectly what God is. What then is the message? *God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all—i.e., God is absolute holiness, and in Him there is no sin at all.* This is the principal thought contained in this exquisite metaphor, as is evident from the subsequent context. The Apostle, in our judgment, does not refer to any passage in his Gospel, nor to any other portion of Scripture, but condenses in this diamond cup the cream of what the Eternal Son in our nature uttered concerning the perfections of God : He is perfect and immutable Holiness. Cf. 2 : 29.

But the main thought includes others, some of which may be briefly illustrated. The material light is distinguished for its clearness, purity, and beauty, and since God is a being of absolute holiness, He must have all possible perfection. His intellect, without which holiness is inconceivable, is infinite. God's knowledge of Himself and of every thing else is light ; there is no darkness whatever about it. The absolutely Holy One is a law to Himself ; perfect justice with no partiality ; absolute truth, with no

possibility of error, and perfectly truthful in every manifestation which He gives of His infinite perfections, whether in external nature, in Scripture, or in the person of His incarnate Son. (2 : 18, etc. ; Heb. 1 : 1, 2.)

So pure is the light that it cannot be defiled by any object through which it passes, or on which it shines ; and the omnipresent Holy One, although constantly and perfectly seeing all the wickedness of men and demons, cannot be polluted with this moral filthiness. (Jas. 1 : 13-15.)

“ Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.” But God has in Himself the absolute beauty, the beauty of holiness, and *to see God* is to discern and delight in this beauty, and so to enjoy communion with Him, in this life and in that which is to come. Ps. 17 : 15 ; Mat. 5 : 8.

The light that now shines in our world is the same in nature as that which our first parents beheld in Eden, and He who is Holiness changeth not. If we would partake of the light of His gladness, we must partake of the light of His holiness. Jno. 3 ; Heb. 12 : 10 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 4.

We know that God is a Spirit, that He is light and love, Jno. 4 : 24 ; 1 Jno. 4 : 8, and that the Living God is a consuming fire. Heb. 10 : 26-31 ; 12 : 25-29. We know that He is a Spirit having all possible perfection, admitting of no increase in holiness or in any attribute of His nature. *God never walks in the light, but He is Light, and is in the light.* But metaphysical speculations concerning “ the Absolute,” or what God is in Himself, are perfectly vain, and often lead to blasphemous results. “ Who by searching can find out God ?” Who can tell what His essence is ? “ God dwelleth in Light Inaccessible and full of glory,” too bright for creature-eyes to look upon. We have no faculty by which we can bring His essence before the mind’s eye, and gaze upon that essence.

What then ? We can see God in Christ. See Jno. 14 : 6-10 ; Col. 1 : 15 ; Heb. 1 : 3 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 6 ; 5 : 18, 19 ;

I Jno. 4 : 9, 10, 14. And in the salvation of men in and by Him, the light of God's holiness, the fire of His justice, and the warmth of His love are equally conspicuous.

A B K L syr vg the message, *aggelia* ; C the promise, *epaggelia* ; as c. t., perhaps originally a marginal note from 2 : 25. H. Stephens conjectured *apaggelia*, but for this there is no manuscript authority. The reading in S is a blunder of some transcriber.

§ 1. Walking in the light and consequent communion with God presuppose that we discern and acknowledge our relation to Him as transgressors of His law ; or, that we confess our sins, and trust in the propitiation and intercession of His Son Jesus Christ for our forgiveness and sanctification. I : 6 ; 2 : 2.

‘ If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth : ’ but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sins.

There can be no friendship without mental congeniality or likeness of disposition, and it is self-evident that the holy alone have communion or fellowship with the Holy God. *If we say that we have communion with Him*, if we should profess that we are friends or lovers of God, *and walk in the darkness*, live and move in the sphere or element of sin, *we lie and do not the truth*, then that saying or profession is a falsehood of which we must be conscious, we not acting as the truth requires. (John delights in repeating the very words of Jesus. Cf. his gospel, 3 : 21 ; 8 : 12.)

The truth is = His word, revealed truth, or the Gospel. Vs. 8, 10 ; Jno. 17 : 17. Such professors are hearers of the word of truth, talkers about it, but not doers of it. Jas. 1 : 21–25. They who walk in the darkness cannot walk with God who is light, and is in the light. *To walk in the light* is used by substitution for voluntary and habitual progress in holiness ; constantly increasing holy acts, external and internal. *To walk in the darkness*, by the same figure, for

constantly increasing sinful acts, external and internal, a voluntary and habitual progress in sin. Walking relates to the whole method of thinking, speaking, and acting, and that as voluntary and habitual : and this is altogether natural, for bodily walking is a daily movement depending on acts of the will.

Can there be a more pitiable and dreadful sight on earth than a professed Christian walking in the darkness, persevering in known sin, and yet boasting of fellowship with God? But here Christ's apostle smites such Antinomian presumption as with a thunderbolt.

But if we walk in the light, as He Himself is in the light, if we live and move in holiness, as God Himself is in it, strive to be holy as He is holy, take Him as the model for imitation, 1 Pet. 1 : 14-16 ; Eph. 5 : 8, etc. ; then we have communion with one another, are a true church, or Christian society, which is "the communion of saints ;" all such having also communion with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, ver. 3. And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.

And as a consequence, or rather as an inseparable adjunct, of this walking in the light, the blood of Jesus (by synecdoche for the sacrifice of Himself) cleanseth us from all sin ; or, from every sin There is a metaphor in the verb cleanseth : The blood of Jesus is like a laver or fountain which takes away the stain of guilt, or liability to punishment. It cleanseth (the present tense intimating its perpetual efficacy) *from all sin*, original and actual ; or from every sin with all its aggravations. And this because He who shed His blood for us is *the Son of God* ; a partaker of His nature, as well as ours. The Dignity of the Person gives infinite validity to the sacrifice, or makes it a perfect expiation for all sin, to those struggling to become like God in moral perfections. Heb. 9 : 14.

With respect to the holiest believer, fellowship with Jesus the Son of God is promoted by the fact that His blood

cleanseth him from all sin. Gratitude to Him, one of the holiest forms of love, is thus kept burning in the heart, and with an ever purer flame.

This most precious text is often quoted (without a word being said of the immediately preceding context) as if it were an invitation or encouragement to unbelievers to trust in Christ. His sacrifice indeed is the only legal basis for such trust, but it is wholly improper to handle any part of Scripture deceitfully or carelessly. Here the Apostle's design is to cheer those who are going on in holiness, in order to get as far as possible into that light in which God is. They alone are spoken of, and he shows why they should never despair, since the blood of Jesus the Son of God *cleanseth them* from all sin.

Our walking in the light adds nothing to the completeness, sufficiency, or efficacy, of Christ's sacrifice, but it proves the reality of our faith in His blood.

If the blood of Jesus the Son of God cleanseth the true believer from all sin, purgatory must exist only in the misdirected conscience of the superstitious, and in the purses of the avaricious. (Notes on 1 Pet. 3 : 18-20 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 3.)

Sins of infirmity often obscure our perception of the light of God's countenance ; but the eye of faith will clearly see it, if we keep on in holy living, follow the direction in the ninth verse, and trust in the perfect efficacy of our Redeemer's sacrifice. What a friend is our God ! How matchless and infinite the grace of His Son. 2 Cor. 8 : 9.

7. A K L cop Jesus Christ, B C S syr sah Jesus, which we prefer. To walk in the light = to do righteousness ; to walk in the darkness = to do sin ; the same thought, but under a different aspect. 1 Jno. 3 : 7-10. A (by the first hand) we have fellowship with Him, B S as c. t.

* If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Communion with God without walking in the light is indeed impossible ; such communion presupposing true holi-

ness and increase in the same, but not sinlessness : *If we say that we have no sin*, or are at present sinless, *we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*, abides not in our hearts. (Jno. 5 : 38.) So far as the saints on earth are concerned, the claim of sinless perfection is self-deception, and the error of those who claim it arises chiefly from ignorance of the truth, which as to them is like a stranger knocking for admission, not like a teacher dwelling in the house.

If the truth be in us as the only infallible principle of faith and rule of right, this claim must be abandoned. For (1.) God justly requires of us a perfect conformity to His law in thought, word, and deed, allowing no deviation whatever. 2 : 1 ; 3 : 4 ; 5 : 17. But who can truthfully say, All my thoughts, desires, words, and actions, are exactly such as God requires? The pretext that God has relaxed His law is absurd ; since there is no injustice in Him, and His law is holy, just, and good. (2.) The falsity of the claim is also proved by positive declarations of Scripture. Besides the words before us, the testimony of James is very explicit, 3 : 2, to say nothing of other passages. (3.) Why did our Lord prescribe a petition for daily forgiveness, if any of His disciples are now sinless? (4.) None of the apostles claimed to be sinless. Is it Christian modesty to suppose ourselves more sanctified than they were when on earth? And is not this species of spiritual pride the natural outgrowth of Semi-Pelagian theology? (5.) The holiest acts of the renewed are tinged with sin, and must be cleansed in the blood of Jesus, ver. 7.

Perfect sanctification both in body and soul is indeed promised to true believers ; but it has never been proved that such promises, or declarations of God's purpose, appertain to those who live in the present dispensation—*e.g.*, Eph. 5 : 27 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 8, 9 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 23, 24 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 10.

They who, contrary to the dictates of conscience, affirm that right and wrong exist only in the fancy of men, or because they are sanctioned by human law (as the sceptical

pagans, Antinomian Gnostics, and their modern followers), must of course put themselves among the sinless ; for if moral light and darkness are the same, then murderers of fathers and of mothers are innocents, then Satan and his lawless gang are sinless.

Pantheists, if logically consistent, must go farther, for if there be but one being, then all the acts of depraved men and demons must be His acts. Then we will have to alter the words of Christ's apostle, and read, God is darkness, and in Him there is no light at all.

* If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Those who are walking in the light see the darkness that is within them, frankly acknowledge that they are wholly unworthy of having fellowship with God ; but in so doing the moral impediment to such communion on their part is removed. Their humility and penitence correspond in some small measure with God's infinite condescension, fidelity, and righteousness. The High and Holy One is the friend of the lowly. Isa. 57 : 15.

1. The legal and moral impediments to communion or friendship with God are the guilt and pollution arising from our sins. What is necessary as a means on our part for their removal? *If we confess our sins*, etc. The confession intended is an effect of repentance, which is a hatred of sin as sin, and a turning of the soul to God for the obtaining of holiness. Such a confession is intelligent and humble ; for the renewed know that sin is not a slight evil, not simply a blameless infirmity, not a calamity for which they are not responsible, but disobedience to God. Ps. 51 : 4. Hence they prostrate themselves before Him, and say, " Behold, I am vile ; what shall I answer thee ? " Job 40 : 4. It is unfeigned and impartial, not a general confession simply, but a particular one, relating to sins of omission and commission, of heart, tongue, and life ; and especially of those

sins whose wounds are still painful in the conscience. Ps. 32 : 2-5. It is a daily secret confession, and made to God alone ; not an occasional one to a so-called priest, not confined to social meetings for prayer, nor to worship in the presence of one's family. Mat. 6 : 5, 6.

It is ever accompanied with faith in the Redeemer and dependence on the promised enlightening and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. Ver. 7 ; 2 : 1, 2, 27, 28 ; 3 : 24.

And they who thus confess their sins, forsake or turn away from them with self-loathing, and full purpose of new and constant obedience. This is its invariable consequence. 3 : 9 ; Prov. 28 : 13 ; Job 1 : 1.

2. God removes the impediments to communion with Himself by *forgiving us our sins, and cleansing us from all unrighteousness*. As to the nature of forgiveness : It is an act or decision of the Lawgiver and Judge of the universe, by which He remits or reverses the sentence of condemnation, or annuls the curse of the law ; in a word, It is the non-imputation of sin to a penitent believer. Rom. 4 : 7, 8 ; Col. 2 : 13, 14 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 19.

Its properties or characteristics : Such being its nature, it is self-evident that, as to us, it is only and wholly of grace. " Being justified gratis because of His grace," or in a perfectly gratuitous manner. Rom. 3 : 24 ; Eph. 1 : 7. " In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." The forgiveness is complete or universal, extending to all sins, ver. 7 ; Col. 2 : 13. If one sin was not forgiven, the curse would remain. Jas. 2 : 10 ; Gal. 3 : 10. It is also irrevocable ; standing good to all eternity. Heb. 10 : 17 ; 9 : 12.

Hence, by the most beautiful and perspicuous substitutions, God is described as hiding His face from our sins, not looking on them as the Judge, and throwing them into the depths of the sea ; and with respect to the law considered as the rule of justification, blotting out the handwriting with its ordinances, or cancelling the bond that declared us con-

demned sinners, taking it out of the way, and nailing it to the cross. Ps. 51 : 9 ; Mic. 7 : 19 ; Col. 2 : 14.

The legal ground of forgiveness, in which the unsullied equity of God appears, is the spotless purity of our Great High Priest and substitute, ver. 7 ; 2 : 1, 2. God indeed casts the sins of the penitent into the depths of the sea, but it is because Christ bore their sins in His body on the tree ; He blotted out and took away the handwriting that was against us, but only by nailing it to the cross of Jesus who is His Son, and our divinely-appointed representative.

The forgiveness of sins is not the whole, but an integral part, of justification. Rom. 4 : 6-8. Justification is the act of God, the Lawgiver and Judge of all, by which He declares a believer righteous in Christ, and on the ground of Christ's perfect obedience or righteousness. Hence He imputes the righteousness of His representative to the believer, forgives his sins, and gives him a perfectly legal right and title to eternal glory with Christ. Rom. 3 : 21-26 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21 ; Rom. 5 : 18, 19 ; Acts 26 : 18 ; Tit. 3 : 7.

Justification and regeneration are simultaneous and inseparable, although perfectly distinct in their nature ; justification being an instantaneous act of the Father, changing our state in relation to the law, and regeneration being an instantaneous effect of the Spirit's operation in the heart. But there could be no communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ here or hereafter, if regeneration was not followed by sanctification, or a *cleansing from all unrighteousness*.

It is a cleansing *from unrighteousness* ; from the stain of moral pollution. It consists in a deliverance from the love and dominion of sin, or as the prophet expresses it, in God's subduing our iniquities. Rom. 6 : 14 ; Mic. 7 : 19.

It is here spoken of as the work of God, as indeed it is ; He cleansing us by His spirit as the agent, and by His word as the instrument. 3 : 9 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 23.

This purification is a gradual work of the Spirit. By

Him, while beholding in the word the glory of our Lord, we are changed from glory to glory, one spot and wrinkle disappearing after another from the face of the inner man, until we become transformed into the very image of Christ. 2 Cor. 3 : 18 ; 4 : 16.

Although this sanctification of the Spirit has its seat in the soul, its blessed influence extends also to the body, so that the whole man becomes like a temple cleansed and consecrated to God. 1 Cor. 3 : 16 ; 6 : 19, 20.

It is a cleansing *from all unrighteousness* ; from the stain of all moral pollution ; not only from the defilement of every sin, but finally from its very inbeing in the soul. Neither is the body to be excluded, since it is to be conformed to Christ's glorious body. Phil. 3 : 21 ; 1 Cor. 15.

3. In removing the impediments to communion with Himself, or in the forgiveness and sanctification of the penitent, God is *faithful and righteous*. (The proper meaning of *dikaïos* is *righteous*, and this translation is every way preferable, since justice is but a form or species of righteousness.)

The faithfulness and righteousness of God in this matter can be understood only by recalling the great stipulations and promises of the Covenant of Redemption. In eternity the Father appointed the Son, with His own consent, to be the Redeemer and substitute of all the saved. Jno. 6 : 37-40 ; 17 : 2 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 20. The Eternal Son engaged to appear in human nature, obey the law and endure its penalty for the complete salvation of all whom the Father had given Him. Heb. 10 : 5-10, with Ps. 40 : 6-8. On this condition the Father promised the Son that He should be satisfied in the salvation of the redeemed, a salvation including their justification, sanctification, and eternal glory in soul and body. Isa. 53 : 10, 11 ; Jno. 6 : 37-40 ; Tit. 1 : 2 ; Rom. 8 : 28-39.

For the accomplishment of this great and glorious purpose, the Father sent the Son into our world. 4 : 9, 10.

And He, while on earth, and in our nature, perfectly discharged all the duties of His office as priest and substitute, by becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 5 : 6 ; 3 : 5, 8. And He, the Righteous One, is now our advocate with the Father, who by raising Him from the dead, and setting Him at His own right hand in the heavenly worlds has, in the clearest and most unquestionable manner, proved that He has accepted and is well pleased with the work of His incarnate Son, our representative. Rom. 4 : 23, 24.

In the execution of this covenant the special office of the Spirit is to regenerate the redeemed, cleanse them from all unrighteousness, and abide in them by His gracious power and operation forever. 1 Pet. 1 : 2 ; Rev. 22 : 1, with 21 : 27 ; Eph. 1 : 13, 14 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 5 ; Eph. 3 : 20, 21.

And the Gospel as preached by the apostles is a manifestation, or clear revelation, of this purpose, promise, and covenant. Tit. 1 : 2, 3, with 1 Pet. 1 : 10-12 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 8-11 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 20-22.

It is evident, then, that *God is faithful and righteous to Christ*, when believers are pardoned and sanctified. And it follows, if we confess our sins, that the unspeakable benefits of the covenant *will most certainly be bestowed on us*. Cf. 1 Thes. 5 : 23, 24 ; Heb. 13 : 20, 21. But it is equally evident that *God is gracious and merciful to us*, since the whole plan of redemption and its execution originated from and depends on pure undeserved love ; “ grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

They who do not discern or who ignore their sinful estate can have no communion with God : a want of confidence in His veracity is incompatible with love to God.

The force of the perfect tense should be noticed : If we say that we *have not sinned*, that we were innocent from our

birth and still remain so. (It is not a repetition and amplification of the eighth verse, where the present tense is used. Those there referred to do not deny past sin and guilt, but claim present sinlessness.) If we say that we have no original sin, or were born without a depraved disposition, and that in our case no actual sins have proceeded from it, but only blameless infirmities, things for which we are not responsible, *we make Him a liar*, act as if He had not spoken the truth, *and His word is not in us*, as the infallible rule of faith ; our own opinions or the speculations of others being substituted for it.

“ The Scripture is written with the foresight of all heresies, because of the omniscience of its Author.” And here Pelagianism is condemned as blasphemous, as a virtual rejection of the whole of Divine revelation, which is based on our fall in Adam, and our redemption in Christ. Rom. 5 : 12-21 ; I Jno. 5 : 10.

The claim of innocency is not only exceedingly irreverent, but also irrational ; contradicting all history, observation, and experience. For why do human beings sin as soon as they are conscious of moral distinctions ? Why have they done so in all ages and nations ? Why do multitudes persist in sinning, notwithstanding the clearest and holiest instruction, and the most pungent and powerful expostulations ? If there be no “ plague of the heart,” whence do these pestilential actions proceed ? Mk. 7 : 20-23 ; Mat. 12 : 33.

Men may have an outside whitewashed holiness, or abstain from open gross transgression, and hence fancy that they have not sinned, and have a right to eternal life on the ground of their own merits or external obedience. So it was with the Pharisee who said : All these things have I kept from my youth up ; but the one thing he lacked was supreme love to God, than which no sin can be greater. Lk. 18 : 18, etc. ; Mat. 5 : 20 ; I Jno. 2 : 15-17.

(The two next verses belong, logically, to A. § 1, and should have been included in Chapter I.)

CHAPTER II.

¹ My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous : ² and he is the propitiation for our sins : and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

In order to promote your Communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, my design is to warn you against presumption and despair, both of which are destructive to such communion.

First we have a warning against presumption : *My little children*, a phrase not necessarily indicative of the writer's advanced age, but rather of his tender love as an apostle of Christ : *little children* (*teknia*) by an elliptical metaphor, Ye who are my children—*i.e.*, beloved by me as such. *These things*—namely, 1 : 1–10, *I write unto you, that ye sin not ;* with that end in view. I write these things, not to give you the least encouragement to sin, but the contrary.

None of the Sacred Writers permit the indulgence of any sin at any time, or by any person ; for they write in the name of Him who is Light, and whose law is Right. Jas. 5 : 10 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 15, 16 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 4.

No beings endowed with reason, will, affections, and conscience can be released from the obligations to obey the moral law. (If they could, hatred to God and to fellow intelligences might become virtues, and sin a word of no meaning.) But redeemed and sanctified men are beings so endowed ; hence they cannot be released from the obligations to obey that law.

The Son of God Himself, in our nature and as our substitute, entered our world under the law, and became obedi-

ent unto death, even the death of the cross. What an unanswerable proof that the law, not as the rule of justification before God, but as the rule of obedience to God, the rule of right thinking, speaking, and acting, can never be abrogated ! Phil. 2 : 6-8 ; Gal. 4 : 4.

The Holy Spirit also magnifies the law as the infallible rule of right, by engraving it in our hearts at our regeneration and subsequent continuous sanctification, in this world and in the world to come. Heb. 8 : 11 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 9.

It will not do, then, to interpret the Apostle thus : I write these things to you in order that ye may avoid sin, so far as the weakness of your nature will permit. It is an unlimited Divine prohibition, although expressed in the form of an apostolical exhortation : Beware, I beseech you, of presumption. Sin not. Always walk in the light, as God Himself is in the light. Never in a single instance disobey Him. I write to you with that end in view.

The antidote to despair follows, which is an unwavering faith in the efficacy of Christ's intercession and propitiation. *And if any one sin* (as who does not ? ver. 8), *we* (who walk in the light as God Himself is in the light, and confess our sins, vs. 7-9) *have an Advocate with the Father*, no common advocate, but *Jesus Christ the Righteous*, a perfect obeyer of the law ; *and He Himself*, the Righteous One, to the exclusion of all others, *is the propitiation for our sins*, etc.—*i.e.*, the victim, the expiatory sacrifice for our sins ; He who renders God propitious to us by the sacrifice of Himself. *An Advocate with the Father : parakletos*, lit. called to one's side ; hence, a helper, defender, advocate ; one who pleads our cause before the Judge of all ; a Priestly Intercessor who approaches the Father in our behalf and as our representative, a perfect obeyer of the law, and Himself the propitiation for our sins : a Priest and a victim, perfectly adapted to all our necessities. Since we have such an Advocate with the Father, we should not despair.

Here it will not be out of place to collect and briefly state the main things revealed concerning our Advocate with the

Father. 1. *Jesus Christ, the Theanthropos, is our only advocate*; for His intercession, or advocacy, is a Priestly act, founded on His propitiation for our sins. But neither angels nor departed saints have made any satisfaction to the law and justice of God for us; and the saints now in heaven are there only because they were redeemed by Christ's blood. Rev. 5 : 9. When believers on earth pray for others, it is not a priestly act, but a petition or petitions based on the sacrifice and intercession of our Great High Priest. Besides, saint-worship and Mary-worship are practical idolatry, since such devotees virtually attribute omniscience and omnipresence to created beings, violate the second commandment, and say, "We have advocates with the Father, saints, and angels in glory," whereas Christ's apostle says, *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous—i.e., to the exclusion of all others.*

2. Christ *now intercedes for us in Heaven.* Heb. 9 : 12, 24; 8 : 1, 2. This was typified by the entrance of the high priest into the inner sanctuary. 3. *He to whom the intercession is made is the Father*, who is Light and Love, who is faithful and righteous to His incarnate Son, and who is well pleased with the righteousness of Him whom He Himself appointed and sent as our propitiation. 4 : 10; 1 : 7, 9. 4. The *nature and equitable basis* of the intercession: It is an indication or expression of His desire as our Priest to the Father. "I pray for them." "Father, I will," or desire. Jno. 17. Or, It is an intercession based on His sacrifice for our sins, His obedience unto death as our divinely appointed representative. Hence it is described by His entering into the holy place with His own blood, after He had obtained eternal redemption, and so appearing in the presence of God for us. Heb. 9. Also, as an interceding for us, or the plea of a priestly advocate, refuting and annulling all our accusers with all their accusations. Heb. 7 : 25; Rom. 8 : 33, 34.

5. As to *the mode* of the intercession, or how He indicates His desire to the Father, it is such as becomes both God and the God-man. So far as Christ is concerned, since He appears before God in our nature and as our representative, it must be reverent ; but yet, as our Priest is Righteous, it must also be with holy confidence. Some will have it that no words are used by our Advocate with the Father, but (although this is a matter of minor importance) if it was not unbecoming the Great Intercessor to use them on earth, what impropriety is there in His employing them in heaven? (To suppose that there is no atmosphere in heaven, and hence that words could not be heard there even if spoken, is a pure begging of the question. And 1 Cor. 15 : 50 means that mortal men shall not inherit the kingdom as Christ's coregents, but the risen and transformed saints shall, vs. 51, 54 ; and that on earth, 1 Cor. 6 : 2 ; Dan. 7 : 27 ; so the allusion to this text does not mend the matter. Hodge, Sys. Theol. vol. 2, p. 593.)

6. *Its characteristics* : It is prevalent or efficacious, and perpetual or everlasting. Heb. 9 : 24, 25. " But He, because He abideth forever, hath an intransferable priesthood. Whence also He is able to save perfectly those coming to God through Him, since He ever liveth to intercede for them."

7. It is generally admitted that *those for whom* He intercedes, and *the great topics* of His intercession are set forth in Jno. 17. 8. *Its necessity* : this arises from two indisputable facts—namely, that the redeemed are by nature the children of wrath, even as others, and that, when renewed, they are but imperfectly sanctified. Eph. 2 : 3 ; 1 Jno. 1 : 7-9.

9. *How can we obtain the benefits* of His intercession? By coming to God through Him as our Priest, or by faith in Him. In other words, By confessing our sins, and entreating God to accept and save us on account of the sacrifice and intercession of Jesus Christ. And so only can our persons and services become acceptable to God. 1 Pet. 2 : 5.

While the high priest under the law was sprinkling the blood on the mercy-seat, the fragrant incense filled the most holy place, and the people were praying without. Lev. 16 ; Lk. 1 : 10. And so while Christ, now in heaven, by His intercession exhibits to the Father the perfection of His propitiation for our sins, let us plead guilty on earth, and lean on Him who died and lives for us. If so, despair will ever be a stranger to us, and God Himself our Friend through Christ.

And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, *yet not for ours only, but also for the whole world—i.e.,* Jesus Christ is the expiatory sacrifice, not for our sins only who now believe in Him, but for the whole of that world for which He is an Advocate with the Father, the great majority of the race ; the proof of which, as Paul expresses it, shall be given at the proper times. 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6. (Cf. Eph. 1 : 9, 10 ; Col. 1 : 20 ; Acts 3 : 19-21.) Jno. 1 : 29 ; 1 Jno. 4 : 14.

These words cannot be rightly explained by saying that Christ's sacrifice is sufficient for the redemption of all men, without exception and without distinction ; for the infinite worth of that sacrifice in itself considered is one thing, and its designed application to men for their salvation is another. Faith in His blood, too, is the gift of God, and it is indisputable that many of this dispensation do not believe in Christ. Rom. 3 : 25 ; Eph. 2 : 8 ; Jas. 2 : 5 ; Tit. 1 : 1. Besides, a propitiation for sins is a sacrifice that propitiates God, renders Him gracious as Judge, or procures His favor for those who have transgressed His law. And such a sacrifice cannot be separated from the intercession of Jesus Christ ; both being inseparable acts of His priestly office, as the Apostle here takes for granted.

Moreover, none can intelligently deny that universal terms, or indefinite expressions, must in all cases be explained according to the light shed on them by the context. For example : " Every man," in Col. 1 : 28, means every

one to whom Paul preached. "The world is gone after Him," means many of the Jews. Jno. 12 : 19. "The whole world," in 1 Jno. 5 : 9, refers to all the unrenewed, they who are not children of God, but asleep in the arms of Satan. And here "the whole world" means all of mankind for whom Christ is the Advocate and Propitiation ; all that shall believe and be saved. Jno. 17 : 2, 9, 20, 24.

Our view, then, of the Extent of the Atonement, or the persons for whom Christ died, may be thus exhibited : I. Those who are or who will finally be lost are not included in the whole world here spoken of. "Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, . . . who also intercedeth for us," Rom. 8 : 34—*i.e.*, None for whom Christ died and intercedes will be condemned. Other passages do not contradict this unmistakable declaration : for Jno. 17 : 12, must be thus understood : "Those whom thou hast given me I have kept, and not one of them is lost, but the son of perdition (is lost), that the Scripture might be fulfilled." (See Introduction to James 3.) 2 Pet. 2 : 1. "Denying the Lord that bought them"—*i.e.*, according to their own declarations and profession. And the perishing of the weak brother for whom Christ died, 1 Cor. 8 : 11, refers not to future everlasting condemnation, but to the present destruction of His happiness, the wounding of His weak or partially enlightened conscience, ver. 12.

Jesus Christ died that men might be justified and sanctified, and obtain eternal life, Jno. 1 : 29 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 5 ; 1 : 7 ; 4 : 9, 10, and so become the Saviour of the world. 4 : 14 ; cf. 1 Pet. 2 : 24 ; Tit. 2 : 14 ; 1 Jno. 5 : 11-13. But these ends are not attained by the lost, and we have no right to say that Christ died in vain. (Gal. 2 : 21.) Cf. Jno. 6 : 36-40.

And it is self-evident that God, notwithstanding Christ's sacrifice, is not and never will be propitious to the lost, but His wrath abideth on them. Jno. 3 : 36.

II. Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the vast majority of mankind : including

1. All the elect of this and preceding dispensations ; or all believers from the fall to the second advent. These constitute the Church as God looks at it, the *Ecclesia*, or the redeemed who are called out of the world and sanctified, during the time designated. Eph. 5 : 25-27 ; Acts 20 : 28 ; Gal. 1 : 4 ; Rom. 8 : 31-34 ; 9 : 23, 24 ; Acts 15 : 14-18.

These, after their resurrection, are to reign with Christ, or be His coregents in the government of mankind. Rev. 20 : 4-6. They are also symbolized by the holy city, New Jerusalem ; and the explanation given is, The Bride, the Lamb's wife—*i.e.*, Christ's Queen. Another explanation of the symbol is, The Tabernacle of God with mankind, then His people ; or those in and by whom God is to manifest to mankind the exceeding riches of His grace. Rev. 21.

And those of the Elect who are now in heaven look forward with joy and gratitude to this coregency with Christ on earth, and humbly acknowledge that it is owing to their redemption by His blood. Rev. 5 : 9, 10. And thus we see the ultimate design of Christ's propitiation, so far as the Elect are concerned, and as it is understood and believed by them in heaven.

2. He died for all the predestinated of "the ages" or dispensations "that are coming." (Eph. 2 : 7.) (a) For all the unglorified but sanctified kings and nations that shall exist during the millennial dispensation ; which begins with the second personal coming of Christ. Dan. 7 : 13, 14 ; Rev. 21 : 3-4 ; and vs. 24-26. All these have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life, or are predestinated to obtain eternal blessedness. Rev. 21 : 27. And for all these Jesus Christ is the propitiation. He died to procure their eternal salvation. And since the thousand years are a symbolic designation of time (a day for a year), what vast multitudes of the redeemed will be born, and exist in holiness, during the three hundred and sixty thousand years !

Among these nations, Israel, redeemed by Christ's blood, sanctified by His Spirit, and restored to their own land, shall hold a most distinguished place. Isa. 59 : 20, 21 ;

60 : 1-22 ; Ezek. 34 : 11, etc. ; 36 : 24, etc. ; 37 : 15, etc. ; cf. Mat. 19 : 28 ; Jno. 11 : 51.

(b) For all that shall exist after the resurrection and condemnation of the unholy dead. At the close of the thousand years, after the punishment of those who are to revolt against the government of Christ as then instituted on earth, Rev. 20 : 7-10, and after the resurrection and condemnation of all the unholy dead, Rev. 20 : 11-15, it seems to us that the absolutely perfect dispensation will begin ; or the restoration of all things consummated. (Acts 3 : 19-21.) Rev. 22 : 3, 14. Then there will be no curse any more, and men will be sinless or perfectly obedient, and have a right to immortality (at such times and in such numbers as pleases God), and admission among the glorified ; which is symbolized by partaking of the tree of life, and entering by the gates into the city. That mankind will then exist in perpetual generations, is evident from the fact that the glorified will reign for ever and ever, and that over unglorified kings and nations. Rev. 22 : 5 ; 21 : 23-26 ; cf. Rom. 5 : 18, 19.

So we humbly conceive that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the whole world. Now to the One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be all the glory forever.

1. In Jno. 14, 15, 16, the Holy Spirit is called *parakletos*, a helper, as dwelling with and in the disciples, the teacher of truth, and the author of holiness in men, and as testifying concerning Christ. (Eng. Vers. comforter.) In Rom. 8 He is said to help believers in their prayers, teaching them how to pray, and what to pray for. He acts within us by applying the truth concerning Christ to our hearts, and by stirring up and keeping alive all holy affections, so making us meet for eternal glory.
2. B cop sah monōn, S vg *monon*, as c. t. *Hilasmos*, as in 4 : 10. Sept. Num. 5 : 8 ; Ps. 130 : 4 ; cognate verb, Lk. 18 : 13 ; Heb. 2 : 17. By the world that shall know and believe in Christ, in Jno. 17 : 21, 23, we understand mankind that are to live under the dispensations above described, II. 2.

In Rev. 22 : 14, B cop Tertullian, Cyprian, have who do His commandments ; A S who wash their robes ; vg adds in the blood of the Lamb. (Perhaps an interpolation from 7 : 14.)

§ 2. Walking in the light and consequent communion

with God cannot exist without a true knowledge of Him, united with love, which is shown by keeping His commandments, and especially the commandment to love one another. 2 : 3-11.

³ And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴ He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected : hereby know we that we are in him. ⁶ He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

And hereby we know that we have known Him, that we have become acquainted with Him as our friend, *if we keep*, etc. (Eng Vers. here improperly confounds the perfect and the present. See 2 Cor. 5 : 16. But correctly, vs. 13, 14 ; 3 : 6 ; 4 : 16.) So in ver. 4, it should be *I have known Him*.

1. Nature of the knowledge : It is such a knowledge of God as is essential to communion or friendship with Him. But this friendship cannot exist without a knowledge of Him as Light, or the absolutely Holy One, and as the Father loving believers on account of the intercession and sacrifice of Christ. It is not, however, a mere intellectual discernment of these truths, nor a scientific apprehension of them as necessary to the consistency and symmetry of the revealed plan of salvation, but an experimental knowledge of God resulting from the illuminating and purifying operations of the Spirit, cf. 2 : 20, 27, a knowledge connected with eternal life. Jno. 17 : 3.

2. Its inseparable attendants : Love to God, and implicit constant faith in Him. As to the first : But whoever keepeth His word, *truly in this one the love of God hath been perfected* : which is generally acknowledged to be difficult of interpretation. *The love of God—i.e.*, our love to God ; as in ver. 15 ; 3 : 17 ; 5 : 3. *Hath been*, or is, *perfected—i.e.*, perfectly proven : he who constantly obeys God's word

gives a demonstration of his love to Him. Cf. notes on 5 : 3. In him supreme or complete love to God is truly exhibited. Or (which amounts to the same thing) his love to God is proved to be perfect—*i.e.*, whole-souled or sincere ; he is not a liar or hypocrite, ver. 5. (Notes on Jas. 2 : 22.) *Hath reached its telos*, its consummation or perfection, as others explain. But an ideal or supposed case of sinless obedience to God, is a proof (if a proof at all) of only ideal or supposed love. It is and can be no criterion of real love to God either in nature or degree.

As to the second : *Hereby* (by obedience springing from love to God) *we know that we are in Him*, ver. 5, and *abide in Him*, ver. 6. To be and abide in God are metaphors to denote implicit and constant faith in Him (as in 2 : 28, Abide in Him ; spoken of trust in Christ). We are and abide in Him as the fortress and home of our souls by a living faith ; a faith that works by love to God, and is the proximate internal cause of all right and acceptable obedience. The genuineness of this faith is known by obedience united with or proceeding from love. Cf. Ps. 90 : 1 ; Prov. 18 : 10 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 5. Friendship with God, then, presupposes a true knowledge of God, love to Him, and an implicit and constant confidence in Him : these are the inseparable attendants of such fellowship.

We are in Him, not by an absorption of our spiritual substance or essence into that of God, at regeneration or subsequently, as some mystics have imagined ; neither are we in Him because the essence of God and man is one and the same, according to the profane dream of the pantheists ; but we are in Him because we are enlightened and sanctified by the Spirit on His part, and by faith which worketh by love on our part. It is not an essential indwelling, but a moral one, a confiding love. (So in 2 Cor. 7 : 3, "Ye are in our hearts," the reference is to a confiding love.) And *we abide in Him* by a constant faith, of which love is an inseparable adjunct, or invariable effect. 1 Jno. 3 : 24 ; 4 : 13, 15, 16 ; cf. Eph. 3 : 16-19. (Notes on 2 : 28.)

God abides in us as His temple, and we abide in Him as our refuge and home.

3. The criterion by which we must judge concerning this knowledge, love, and confidence : *if we keep His commandments*. Not one or two precepts, but having respect to them all. Ps. 119 : 6. Or, *whoever keepeth his word—i.e.*, in its totality, as the rule of holy living. *To keep* the commandments, or word, of God, is a metaphor often used in Scripture : As a shepherd watches or keeps his eye on all the flock, lest they go astray to their ruin, so they who know, love, and trust in God, keep their eye on the commandments, in order to do them, and to walk with Him as their friend. It is an unfeigned obedience to God that is here intended, an habitual and willing obedience arising from supreme love to Him, an obedience that relates to the whole moral law ; but not a sinless obedience. 1 : 8. (This will be elucidated, by attending to the synonymous expressions in Ps. 119 : 1-3.)

“To walk in the light, as God is in the light,” and “to keep His commandments,” are the same, although considered from a different point of view ; in the former mode of speech God is regarded as the perfect model for imitation, in the latter, as the Supreme Lawgiver whose precepts are the infallible rule and standard of righteousness.

This criterion is necessary ; for *he that saith, I have known Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a liar*, or a hypocrite, *and in this one the truth is not*, as the only infallible rule of faith and of right. (Notes on 1 : 6-8.)

4. The obligation to obey God as above described, is enforced by the example of Christ : *He that saith he abideth in Him*, he who professes to have a constant faith in God conjoined with love, *ought himself also so to walk, even as That One walked—i.e.*, when in our world. *That one* refers to Christ, the incarnate Son of God, the great Friend and Redeemer of believers ; as in 3 : 3, 5, 7, 16 ; 4 : 17 ; cf. 2 Pet. 1 : 16 ; Gr. *okeinos*, that wonderful and distinguished being, before described. 1 : 1, 2.

The obedience which the Eternal Son in our nature rendered unto the Father was characterized in a pre-eminent degree by a knowledge of God, love to and faith in Him. It was indeed always sinless, yet ever progressive. Lk. 2 : 49, 52 ; Jno. 8 : 46 ; 15 : 10 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 5 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 22. And our obedience should be a most careful imitation of His ; always indeed confessing our deficiencies, but ever aiming at an exact and sinless obedience. 2 Cor. 3 : 18 ; Mat. 5 : 48 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 21-23. (Notes on 4 : 17.)

The different forms of *autos* in this context we take as designating the Father ; but if understood of the Son, as in 3 : 2, 3, 6 ; 2 : 28, the meaning of " Being and abiding in Him " is not altered. The latter mode of explanation is favored by the near context, vs. 1, 2, and also by the fact that communion with the Father is described, 1 : 6-10. But since the transitions from the Father to the Son, and from the Son to the Father, are so sudden in this epistle, we have above explained the different forms of *autos*, with their adjuncts, of the Father. Still, it must be admitted that it would be natural to suppose that this context treats of communion with His Son Jesus Christ, if the fifth verse did not forbid it ; for *the love of God* is most intimately connected with the knowledge, obedience, and abiding spoken of—*i.e.*, they all appertain to the same person. 4. *Hoti* (recitative) in A B S ; C K L omit. *Hoti* recitative may be indicated in English by the usual marks of citation : He that saith, " I have known Him." 6. C K S cop so, A B sah vg omit.

⁷ Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. ⁸ Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you : because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. ⁹ He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. ¹⁰ He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. ¹¹ But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

Walking in the light and consequent communion with God and Christ cannot exist without love to the brethren. 1 : 3, 7. If we love God, we will love the special objects of

His love. 4 : 9, 10. If we love Him, we will keep the commandment to love our brethren. 4 : 20, 21. The connection is also with the sixth verse : Christ's whole life on earth was a walk in love, and so ye ought to walk.

The Apostle begins the topic by declaring that the commandment intended is both old and new. *The commandment* is the substance, or a summary, of the second table of the moral law, so far as our brothers in Christ are concerned ; as is evident from vs. 9-11. It is *old*, not *new* or recently heard ; but *the word which ye had and heard from the beginning—i.e.*, ever since ye had the Scriptures, and heard the Gospel. (Cf. Jas. 2 : 8.) *From the beginning* must always be explained in accordance with the context and subject-matter.

Again, or the second time, having written it before in the Gospel, Jno. 13 : 34, 35, *a new commandment I write to you* : new, because first perfectly exemplified in Christ, and first promulgated by Him with a new motive ; a motive never stale, but fresh to the taste of your renewed souls. "A new commandment I give you, That ye love one another ; as I loved you, that ye also love one another." (Cf. 1 Jno. 3 : 16, Gr. ; 2 Jno. vs. 5, 6.) To this John unquestionably alludes.

The accuracy of the interpretation appears from what follows : *which thing—i.e.*, the love required in the commandment, *is true in Him*, exemplified or a perfect reality in Him, *and partially in you* ; *because* in your case *the darkness is passing away* (or passeth away, as in ver. 17), *and the true light is already shining—i.e.*, because in you the sinful disposition is disappearing, and the holy disposition, corresponding to that in Christ, is already becoming conspicuous. In Him there is no darkness, no error or sin, to pass away, and in you it is disappearing.

Some explain "the darkness" of the law, and "the light" of the Gospel. But this is untenable ; for (1.) John never so describes the law. (2.) This interpretation disregards the indisputable meaning of 1 : 5-7, of which the

present context is a further elucidation. (3.) It gives a wholly inaccurate translation of *paragetai* which is = passeth or is passing away. (4.) It ignores the fact that the two last clauses of the verse assign the proximate cause of the love as existing in the hearts of the disciples addressed. (5.) It is inconsistent with the meaning of "light" and darkness in what follows.

He that saith he is in the light, who professes to be in a state of holiness or regenerated, *and hateth his brother*, cherishes and habitually manifests ill-will towards him, *is in the darkness until now*, is still in a state of sin, or has never been renewed. Cf. 3 : 14, 15.

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, perseveres in holiness, stays in it as the element or home of his soul, *and in him there is no stumbling-block*, no permanent obstacle or hindrance in his heart to the free exercise of brotherly love ; no fixed malice causing himself or others to stumble, or fall into sin. He abides in the light, and if there be a stumbling-block it is not in his loving heart, but outside of him, in the hearts of the malicious. There seems to be an allusion to Ps. 119 : 165. "Great peace have they who love thy law, and there is no stumbling-block to them : " they have an unobstructed road to a delightful home. Here the metaphor is somewhat different, and the sense is, Hatred is no permanent obstacle in his heart, like a stumbling-block in the path of the blind.

But he that hateth his brother is in the darkness, sin is the element in which he exists, *and in the darkness he walketh*, he willingly continues in sin, *and knoweth not whither he is going*, the place of his final destiny, the terminus of the way in which he walks (Jude, ver. 13), *because the darkness blinded his eyes*, because sin long ago obscured his intellectual powers, and especially from the moment he began to hate his brother.

We either love or hate. There is no half-way house in the soul. Indifference to our brethren in Christ is hatred

in the germ ; contempt, the opening bud, violent dealing, the mature evil fruit. Men may call themselves Christians, and yet show a malignant spirit towards those disciples with whom they are associated. What a shocking inconsistency ! Professing to have the mind of Christ, while imitating Satan ! But such men existed in the churches planted by the apostles ; and so it is still.

They who disobey this commandment cannot plead ignorance as an excuse. They also disregard the authority of Christ Himself, are unmoved by the matchless example of His love, and so prove that they are not yet renewed, and no friends of God and of Christ.

Love to our brethren, arising from love to God and Christ, is the way to eternal light ; hatred to them, the way to everlasting darkness. What unspeakable misery will there be in an eternity of hating ! What unspeakable blessedness in an eternity of loving !

We should carefully notice the power of a depraved disposition and will in the obscuration of the intellect and conscience as to truth and duty. The darkness within blinds the eyes of the soul. They who walk in the darkness and persist in so doing, see not the beauty of holiness in the various forms of love, nor the ugliness of sin and its desert of punishment, and hence they ignore what is revealed concerning the prison of the unholy. But mere human opinions, speculations of depraved men, are miserable substitutes for divine revelation. Rom. 3 : 4.

Most of the figures in this context are substitutions. 7. A B C S sah cop vg beloved, K L brethren. A B C S vg omit from the beginning *after* heard, K L retain it. 8. *Alethes*, *true*, real, in opposition to what is false or unreal, as also in ver. 27, *alethinon*, genuine, original ; like the holiness of Christ, the true or original light. Jno. 1 : 9. S both in him and in you ; A in us, but they are singular in these readings, and *skia* (instead of *skotia*) in A is either a mistake or an interpolation. The c. t. is supported by B C K L.

9. S Cyprian are singular in reading Is a liar and is in the darkness until now.

§ 3. All true believers, whether children, young men, or

fathers, congratulated as persons walking in the light, and having communion with God and with Christ : or, as those who sins have been forgiven, as knowing the Father and the Eternal Word, and as conquerors of Satan. 12-14.

¹² I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. ¹³ I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. ¹⁴ I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

This paragraph, lucid in itself, has been rendered obscure by the conflicting opinions and arguments of interpreters. The fourth *I write* should be *I have written* (epistolary aorist, as in 5 : 13 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 12), which is the best authenticated reading. *I write* and *I have written* are thrice used. *Teknia*, ver. 12, and *paidia*, ver. 13, are = little children (see Jno. 13 : 33, *teknia*, and 21 : 5, *paidia*) : or if there is any difference, which is very doubtful, *teknia* is little children—*i.e.*, little sons and daughters, and *paidia*, little sons. We hold that they are of the same signification.

I write, or I am writing, refers to the present epistle as not yet finished, and to the whole of it, as in 1 : 4 ; 2 : 1 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 1. *I have written* refers not to the preceding part of the epistle as already finished, for that is natural only at the conclusion of a letter, as in 5 : 13 ; or of a particular topic, as in 2 : 21, 26 ; but it refers to his gospel as already written, and in the hands of his readers ; which is favored by the undoubted allusions to his gospel in 2 : 8 ; 3 : 1, and in the exordium of the epistle. So interpreted, the general sense is : I write this epistle as I have written my gospel to testify the eternal existence of your Redeemer, the love of the Father to us in Him, and the mode of obtaining communion with God and eternal life in Christ ;

and now I rejoice over you, one and all, who are partaking of this communion and redemption. If this view be correct, the repetitions are necessary to indicate the sameness of the Apostle's main design in the epistle and the gospel ; and this is the most natural way of accounting for them. (See Braune and Mombert in loc.)

Teknia by itself is metaphorically used. 2 : 1, 28 ; 3 : 7, 18 ; 4 : 4 ; 5 : 21, and *paidia*, 2 : 18. But here little children are distinguished from young men and fathers, and since John writes only to believers, 5 : 13, the expressions must be literally understood—namely, little children who believe in Christ, Mat. 18 : 6, as well as aged believers and those in the bloom and vigor of youth.

Forgiveness of sins, a knowledge of the Eternal Word and of the Father in and by the incarnate Son, and victory over Satan, are gracious benefits bestowed upon all believers, but here Christ's apostle adapts his instructions and encouragements to the prevailing dispositions and the peculiar temptations of believers in every period of life.

IN THIS EPISTLE.

I write to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake : 12.

I write to you, fathers, because ye have known Him who is from the beginning : 13.

I write to you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one : 13.

IN THE GOSPEL.

I have written to you, little children (*paidia*), because ye have known the Father : 13.

I have written to you, fathers, because ye have known Him who is from the beginning.

I have written to you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one : 14.

Thus the general design of the Epistle and Gospel to believers in every period of life is exhibited. Cf. Jno. 20 : 31, with 1 Jno. 5 : 13. And we see that loving congratulations, from a full heart, are thrown upon the objects of his Christian love, with no dread of tautology. Is not this perfectly natural, and altogether becoming " the disciple whom Jesus loved ?"

Neither should we say, How can little children under-

stand the gospel and first Epistle of John? We answer that in John's writings, as in all the Scriptures, "there are shallows in which lambs may wade, and depths in which elephants may swim." And children are not only externally holy, when consecrated in baptism to the service of the One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 7 : 14, but the promised Spirit is given to renew and sanctify them, as well as others. Acts 2 : 38, 39. They therefore can have a saving knowledge of the Father's love, can trust in Christ, and love and obey in a manner suited to their age and faculties. Hear the great and good Shepherd Himself : Feed my lambs. Jno. 21 : 15, 17 ; Mat. 18 : 1-6 ; cf. 2 Tim. 3 : 15 ; 2 Chron. 34 : 3 ; Deut. 6 : 6, 7.

The Apostle congratulates and cheers the little children in a twofold manner. 1. *Because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.* *Have been forgiven*—i.e., by the Father, and the perfect tense intimates that it is a permanent thing, or irrevocable. *His name* (that of Jesus Christ) means that by which He is known and distinguished from all other beings ; his character and perfections as revealed in Scripture, and manifested by His obedience unto death. *For His name's sake*, means that the Father has forgiven your sins on account of Christ's work as Redeemer ; for the sake of His name so revealed manifested and known, or to show forth His glory as the Saviour. This forgiveness implies trust in Christ's sacrifice and intercession, and a penitent confession of sin on the part of little children.

2. *Because ye have known the Father*—i.e., as your Friend and Father in Christ ; you have, by the forgiveness received, looked into His heart and seen how it throbs with love to you ; ye know that the Father has adopted you, or taken you into His family as His little sons and daughters.

And this encouragement is not only in itself delightful, and promotive of gratitude and obedience, but also exceedingly appropriate. For the conscience of a child is soft and tender, readily susceptible of impressions from the

truths of God's Word, and quickly wounded thereby ; and hence it should be wisely and lovingly healed, by showing that God is good and ready to forgive, and is righteous and faithful in so doing to the Son of His love, whom He appointed and sent into the world as the Redeemer of little children, as well as adults.

I write and have written to you, *fathers, because ye have known Him who is from the beginning.* 1 : 1-3. My design in writing to you both in this Epistle and in the Gospel must be expressed by the same words, for your knowledge of the Redeemer's person is eminently profound and accurate. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." Prov. 16 : 31. And as holiness increases, knowledge advances with equal steps ; especially a clearer apprehension and firmer conviction of the Eternal existence and Godhead of Him who was manifested in flesh for God's glory in your salvation. If you must soon depart, it is to be with Christ, and every one of you can emphatically say, *I know whom I have trusted.* Phil. 1 : 23 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 12.

As to the *young men, their victory over the wicked one* is the subject of the Apostle's congratulation ; the other clauses show how they overcome him who is emphatically *the malignant one*. Cf. 3 : 12 ; 5 : 18, 19 ; Eph. 6 : 16 ; Mat. 13 : 19. Strong, abideth, have overcome, are metaphors, and the wicked one, by synecdoche, includes the general with all the troops of wicked spirits under his control. Eph. 6 : 12. *Because ye are strong, valiant soldiers in Christ's army, and the word of God in you abideth*, is ever in your hearts as the rule of faith and holy living *and* (so) *ye have overcome the malignant one*, have become and still are superior to his temptations, so that he is like a vanquished enemy.

"The glory (or ornament) of young men is their strength," Prov. 20 : 29, and as to Christian young men it is the power of their faith, the energy of their will, their activity in the service of Christ ; and all this while suppress

ing the powerful lusts peculiar to their age, 2 Tim. 2 : 22, and smiting the Evil One with the sword of faith. So are they "strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man." Cf. 5 : 4, 5 ; 4 : 4.

The victory over the wicked one begins at regeneration, and goes on during the whole development of our spiritual life. 5 : 18, 19. But the final and complete victory is still future. Rom. 16 : 20 ; Rev. 20 : 1-3.

It is characteristic of a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, to rejoice when he sees the grace of God, or observes the indubitable effects of His love in others. So it was with Barnabas, Acts 11 : 23, and with the disciple whom Jesus loved : so it is with all the renewed. How is it with us? (Cf. Lk. 15 : 10.)

13. A B C L S cop sah I have written to you, paidia, *egrapsa* ; K I write, etc. ; vg I write five times, omitting the 2d I write unto you, fathers, etc., in which it is singular.

Some take little children, fathers, and young men as elliptical metaphors, and suppose that believers in different stages of the spiritual life are thus intimated ; but the same result is reached by interpreting as above. Calvin takes *teknia*, ver. 12, of Christians in general ; what follows, of those in different periods of life. But that is to disregard the threefold designation of the persons twice addressed, and the time of writing to them. He and Doddridge also are for altering the text according to their conjectures, contrary to the very first principles of Biblical criticism. The c. t. (except the 4th I write) is unassailable, being supported by the weightiest authorities. And the sameness of the Apostle's design in the epistle and gospel, as well as the fervor of his Christian love, sufficiently account for the repetitions.

§ 4. Walking in the light and consequent communion with God presuppose love and obedience ; but love to the Father and the doing of His will are wholly incompatible with supreme love to the world.

¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world pass-

eth away, and the lust thereof : but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

The connection is not only with the leading thought of the first main division of the epistle, but also with the immediately preceding context : As Christ's apostle I say to you who have been forgiven, who have known the Father and the Eternal Word, and who have overcome the malignant one, Love not the world, etc. ; which is a heart-stirring motive enforcing the prohibition.

Nature and extent of the prohibition : *Love not the world, nor the things in the world* : set not your affections supremely on worldly men and worldly things. *World* by metonymy for the men of the world : so also ver. 17. The *world* and *its* lust ; worldlings and their desires. In the phrase, *the things in the world, in the world* is = in our world ; so that the sense is, Love not worldly things, or things on earth. Or, if there be a figure, it must be a metonymy : the things that are in the hearts of worldlings, as in ver. 16 ; love not what they do.

The world as John views it consists of those who neither know Christians nor Christ, 3 : 1, who hate the righteous, 3 : 13, and who are wholly under the influence and in the power of the wicked one. 4 : 4 ; 5 : 19. (See Perowne on Ps. 17 : 14.) And here : They who love not God nor do His will, but set their heart on fleeting worldly things, as if they were the chief good, or fountains of blessedness.

The love of benevolence and beneficence towards the worldly or unrenewed is required, Mat. 5 : 43-47 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 9-12, but that of complacency is forbidden. Cf. Jas. 4 : 4. We are to cultivate and exhibit good-will to all, even to our enemies ; do good to them that hate us, and pray for the present and eternal well-being of our persecutors. But we are not to approve of or delight in them, as worldlings ; we are not to select such and associate with them as our intimate friends, or follow their maxims and conduct. And we must not be so inconsiderate and dis-

obedient as to think that the things in the world can be the chief good of a friend of God and of Christ.

Motives : 1. The love of complacency to the worldly-minded is wholly incompatible with love to the Father. *If any one love the world*, takes a supreme delight in the ungodly who mind earthly things, *the love of the Father is not in him*. He is an idolater, placing his affections on the unholy, not on Him whom he calls his Father in Christ. Supreme love to Him who is light, and supreme love to them that walk in the darkness, cannot exist at the same time in the same soul ; the one affection of necessity excludes the other.

2. Supreme attachment to worldly things, or an intense longing for them as the chief good, is an infallible proof that such persons are still unrenewed. *Because all that is in the world*, all that is in the hearts of worldly men, considered as the object of lust or inordinate desire, the sum total of what is longed for by them as the chief good, *is not of the Father*, originates not from Him as the author or efficient cause, *but is of the world*, gushes out of the hearts of men that are unrenewed. (5 : 19.)

The intermediate clauses are explanatory of "all that is in the world : " All that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father, but is of the world. *The lust of the flesh*, the inordinate desire proceeding from the flesh, or body, the lower animal nature ; leading to gluttony, drunkenness, and voluptuousness. Lk. 21 : 34 ; Eph. 5 : 18 ; Rom. 13 : 12-14. Also, all undue anxiety and longing for the supply of even necessary bodily wants. Mat. 6 : 24-34. Briefly, the lust of the flesh is a prevailing desire to indulge the animal appetites, making that indulgence our god. *The lust of the eyes* is the sinful desire proceeding from the eyes as the inlets to the soul. Under this, besides other things, such as magnificent buildings, showy furniture, gay clothing, ornamental gardens, extensive and highly cultivated farms, may be included a supreme or exclusive delight in

the so-called fine arts, painting, and statuary. Surely, the chief good of the soul cannot consist in beholding such things. *The pride of life*, the boasting, ostentation, or arrogance of life : *he alazoncia tou biou*. Now *bios* relates to this present life, Lk. 8 : 14, means of living, 8 : 43 ; and hence wealth or competence, as here and 3 : 17, so that the sense is : that boasting which proceeds from the possession of wealth or competence ; such boasting being the effect of vanity, or the desire of showing off one's self, and of pride, or the lust of dominion. (In Jas. 4 : 16, the boastings relate to the future acquisition of wealth.) And who has not seen the vain-glorious display arising from the possession of this world's goods, the flags of self-conceited greatness ? And who does not know that gold is lavishly spent by those who are fond of power or political eminence ? Some in their vanity strut and ride as if princes of the blood royal ; boasting of their resources and of their rich kindred—butterflies of a day. Others aim to be lords, each in his own sphere whether greater or smaller, using “ the life of the world ” to crown themselves. Christ's apostle certainly alludes to men walking among shadows, and yet puffed up with pride and self-conceited greatness. (Ps. 39 : 6.)

The lusts or desires here spoken of pertain to men of the world, who neither love God nor do His will ; and the design of the Apostle is not to give an exhaustive catalogue, but specimens of the desires that generally dwell in their hearts, and appear in their lives : “ All that is in the world,” for example, “ the lust of the flesh,” etc.

3. *And the world is passing away, and the lust thereof*, worldly men and the objects of their desire are constantly disappearing, as a pageant in the streets of a great city, or like actors and shifting scenes in a play (1 Cor. 7 : 31) ; *but he that doeth the will of God* (so showing his love to Him) *abideth forever*, remains perpetually fixed as to the great object of His holy desire, and volition, saying, “ Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none on earth I desire besides Thee.” To all eternity he never wavers as

to the chief good, the proper centre, rest, and portion of the soul.

Abideth, by a metaphor, is = standeth, remains immovable as a house. This interpretation is required by its antithesis to *is passing away*. Cf. Rom. 9 : 11. "That the purpose of God according to election might stand," lit. might abide. Also, by the *implied* opposition of the lust or unholy desire of the world to the holy desire of him that doeth the will of God. He, then, who sets his heart on worldly things, loves a moving shadow, and adores a pompous procession

4. The love here forbidden is wholly unbecoming the friends of God and of Christ, vs. 12-14.

"The greatest difficulty in conversion is to bring the heart *to* God ; the greatest difficulty after conversion is to keep the heart *with* God." Still, they who are of God ever turn to Him, and they who love Christ are crucified to the world. A holy heart fastens itself on the Holy One, and ever so abideth, turning away with shuddering from the darkness of this present evil world, from its insane devotion to fleeting, unsatisfying idols.

15. B K L S cop sah vg the love of the Father, A C the love of God.
16. Some explain *the flesh* of the depraved disposition ; but that is implied in the phrase "all that is in the world," or in the hearts of the ungodly, and in the word "lust." The genitives denote the outward source or occasion ; the external inciters of the inward lust, the inlets through which the unholy disposition is stirred up, and the outlets or gates by which it shows itself. 17. *Abideth forever* = liveth forever, say some ; but though the words in themselves considered may have that meaning, yet the antithesis to the preceding clause requires the interpretation above given.

¹⁸ Little children, it is the last time : and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists ; whereby we know that it is the last time.

¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us ; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us : but they *went out*, that they might be made mani-

fest that they were not all of us. ²⁰ But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. ²¹ I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. ²³ Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father : *but* he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. ²⁴ Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life. ²⁶ These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. ²⁷ But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you : but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. ²⁸ And now, little children, abide in him ; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

§ 5. There can be no communion with the Son and with the Father, no joy or honor at Christ's advent, if we give heed to Antichrists, and reject what God has revealed, and especially concerning Jesus as the Christ. Walking in the light without faith, or an unwavering confidence in the veracity of God, is impossible.

"He that doeth the will of God abideth forever ;" but it is the will of God that we adhere to His word, and abide in Christ, in and by whom the Father is savingly known.

Here we have the relation of Antichrist, and of the many Antichrists to the *parousia* of Christ, 18, 28. Their relation to the church, 19. Why the renewed are not deceived by them, 20, 21. The principal error of the many Antichrists, 22, 23. Exhortations to retain the apostolic doctrine, and to abide in Christ, 24-28.

1. The Apostle begins his warnings, exhortations, and consolations, by setting forth the relation of the future Antichrist and of the many existing Antichrists to the last

hour : *Little children* (*paidia*, an elliptical metaphor, in sense = disciples loved by me as such), *it is the last hour* ; lit. *a last hour*, but since there can be but one last hour, it is in our idiom the same as *the last hour*. *Hour* is used to denote a definite appointed time. And when the sacred writers speak of an hour, it must in each instance be determined by the topic in hand, the context, and the adjuncts which describe it—*e.g.*, Jno. 4 : 21, 52 ; 5 : 28 ; 12 : 27 ; 17 : 1. And we must not forget that an hour as marked on God's eternity-clock differs much from an hour as designated on our chronometers. 2 Pet. 3 : 8. *And as ye heard* (from apostolic preaching and the prophetic Scriptures) *that the Antichrist cometh, even now many Antichrists have arisen* (have begun to be, or are existing), *whence we know that it is the last hour*.

The word *Antichrist*, in itself considered, may mean *instead of Christ*, a vicar of Christ, one claiming to speak and act in His name, or *against Christ* ; His adversary ; or both significations may be combined, Christ's vicar and enemy. The *characteristics* of the many Antichrists, as stated by the Apostle, must guide us to the right explanation. They are described in general terms as liars and deceivers, vs. 22, 26 ; 2 Jno. ver. 7 ; as false prophets, pretenders to infallibility in teaching, 4 : 1-3 ; as apostates and unrenewed, ver. 19. Also, by a declaration of their principal error, deniers of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, vs. 22, 23 ; 4 : 2, 3 ; 2 Jno. ver. 7. It thus appears that John uses the word *Antichrists* as = *enemies of Christ*, real enemies, but professed friends, or false prophets and teachers.

The Antichrist to come he does not here describe, but refers to what they had heard concerning him, and declares that the many existing Antichrists indicate the approach of the Antichrist. The future Antichrist is most fully portrayed. Dan. 11 : 36, etc. ; 2 Thes. 2d chap. He will claim to be God—*i.e.*, a manifestation in human form of the Divine

essence, superior to all preceding manifestations thereof ; superior to Christ Himself. The modern schools of pantheism show the possibility of the thing, and indicate the increasing nearness of this the great enemy of Christ, the Leader of the anti-Christian hosts, of the beast, the kings of the earth and their armies, with the false prophet, and the rest, who are to be destroyed at Christ's advent. Rev. 19. (See Christocracy, Essay II.)

But what does the Apostle mean by *the last hour* ? Some say the end of the Jewish state and church. But that is absurd, the Apostle giving no hints concerning that overthrow. Others explain it of the time from the first to the second advent of Christ, or the whole of the present dispensation. But the last hour of a day is not the whole of that day. Neither is *last* the same as *perilous*, as some imagine, 2 Tim. 3 : 1 ; the former word is a designation of time, the latter a characteristic of it.

The last hour is that in which Antichrist cometh, immediately preceding the Parousia of Christ, vs. 18, 28. So Christ's apostle himself defines it. It is the last hour of the day that is to be followed by the second personal coming of our Lord and Saviour ; the last period of the present dispensation, the hour before Christ appears in His glory.

It is common to speak of the Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian dispensations, and there are facts and doctrines that are peculiar to each, since God was pleased to make known His will in many portions at different times. But all the time from the first Gospel promise to the second advent of Christ may be called a day of twelve hours, according to God's reckoning. Mat. 20 : 1-16. And John seems here to consider all preceding dispensations as but one, or essentially the same with the Christian dispensation. And the great leading characteristics of them all up to Christ's parousia, are the selection and sanctification of His people out of the great mass of mankind ; false prophets and teachers along with and more numerous than the true ; wickedness and error abounding, the tares growing with the

wheat until the harvest, deceivers and deceived becoming bolder and more godless up to the Redeemer's advent. And so considered the sense is : We are living in the last hour of the day which began with the first Gospel promise, and ends in the parousia of Christ. But either way, the sense is substantially the same. What is here said of Antichrist and of the many Antichrists shows that John did not expect a millennium of truth, holiness, and bliss before the second advent.

It was not revealed to John, nor to any, *how long* the last hour would be, or when exactly it would run out, Mat. 25 : 13 ; Acts 1 : 7 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 2, but it was revealed to him that God's clock had struck eleven, and that the last hour of the day was to be sadly distinguished by many enemies of Christ, and soon to be followed by the greatest of all. But the bugle note to the church militant is Maranatha, Our Lord cometh.

The doctrine now briefly stated concerning the Antichrist and his forerunners, was held by the Christian Church from the death of the apostles to the Council of Nice ; as is unquestionable from the writings of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Hippolytus, and Cyprian. They expected no millennium until Christ appeared in His glory, to destroy all anti-Christian powers, and to establish His kingdom on earth. And so far, throwing aside crudities of interpretation, they embraced what is clearly revealed by prophets and apostles. And the Ante-Nicene Christians are not alone in these matters, but have some of the most eminent theologians agreeing with them.

Cyprian. (Epist. 58.) "The Antichrist cometh, but Christ also follows after : the enemy proceeds with violence and rages, but the Lord immediately follows, in order to avenge our sufferings and our wounds." *Augustine.* (3d Tract. 1 Jno.) "Certainly the Antichrist will first come, and then shall come the day of judgment." *Calvin* in loc. "The Apostle according to the common usage of Scripture declares to the faithful that nothing now remains but the

appearing of Christ for the redemption of the world. . . . By the last time the Apostle means that in which all things are so fulfilled that nothing remains but the last revelation of Christ." Calvin, then, did not expect the redemption of the world before Christ's advent. *Pareus* (on Mat. 24 : 14), a scholar of Ursinus, who was the principal author of the Heidelberg Catechism : "It is a thing never to be looked for, that the whole world shall become Christian"—*i.e.*, not before the second coming of Christ ; "since the enemies of the church, together with the Antichrist, shall not cease but at the last advent of Christ." *Dusterdieck*, as cited by Braune : "The anti-Christian spirit works already in many Antichrists ; but the one Antichrist is still future, and is only announced by his forerunners. Although, therefore, the last hour has already come, yet its full close is still to come—viz., the real personal advent of the Lord which will take place immediately after the appearance of the personal Antichrist." (Compare what *Trench* says concerning the tares growing with the wheat until the harvest, in his work on the Parables.)

Augsburg Confession, 17. "Damnamus Anabaptistas, qui nunc Judaicos opiniones spargunt, fingunt ante resurrectionem, pios regna mundi occupaturos esse, ubique deletis aut oppressis impiis :—*i.e.*, We (the Lutheran churches) condemn the Anabaptists, who, now spreading abroad Judaic opinions, imagine that before the resurrection the pious shall obtain the government of the world, and the wicked be everywhere completely destroyed. For we know that the pious ought to obey magistrates, etc. We know also that the church in this life is subjected to the cross, and first after this life will it be glorified : scimus item quod ecclesia in hac vita subjecta sit cruci, et primum post hanc vitam glorificabitur." (7, "They also teach that the one holy Church shall always continue. Now the church, strictly speaking, is the Congregation of Christ's members—that is, of the saints, who truly believe and obey Christ : although in this life many of the wicked and hypocrites are

mingled with this congregation, even to the last judgment.") Here the complete overthrow of the wicked, and the reign of the righteous on earth, *before the resurrection*, are branded as Judaic opinions. And so the second Helvetic confession, representing the view of the Reformed churches. This confession also teaches that Christ will return when wickedness is at its height, when Antichrist rages as a blasphemer and persecutor, and that Christ by His advent will destroy him, 11. (Corpus et Syntagma Conf. Fidei, etc., Geneva, 1654.)

2. The relation of the many Antichrists to the church. *From us they went out*, seceding from us believers, they set up conventicles of their own, *but they were not of us*, not true Christians, not of us in mind or disposition ; *for if they had been of us, they would have abode with us*, if true Christians, they would have continued to associate with us, or remained in the congregations taught by the apostles (4 : 17, Gr.) ; *but they went out in order that they might be made manifest*, that their true character might be demonstrated, 1 Cor. 11 : 19, *that none of them are of us*, that none of these seceders are genuine disciples of Christ, but Antichrists. (See notes below.)

Hypocrites and true believers are in the visible church like chaff and wheat mingled together on the same threshing floor ; the former in the church, but not of it. The complete separation will not be made till Christ comes. Mat. 3 : 10 ; 13 : 40-43. False teachers or Antichrists will be at work until that day. 2 Pet. 2.

When such teachers with their disciples secede from those who hold Apostolic doctrine, and instead of it promulgate speculations of their own, the gracious design of God in thus permitting them to reveal their true character is apparent. If we had no revelation from God concerning the many Antichrists, what a stumbling-block the history of the visible church would be ! How it would melt and confound the stoutest heart ! As it is, we know who and what

the arrogant teachers are, and to whom and when they must give account.

They who are effectually called, persevere in the communion of saints, or abide with those who hold the doctrines of the apostles ; they persevere in truth and holiness. Jno. 10 : 25-30.

When the Reformers of the sixteenth century left the Papal Church, they still remained in the one holy apostolic Church ; for they returned in a good degree to the doctrines taught by the apostles. It was no schism, or sin of any kind, to protest against and abandon those who hindered the reading and preaching of God's Word, who overlaid the Scripture with their traditions, robbed the people with their feigned doctrines, and persecuted unto death the excellent of the earth.

Certainly not a few Antichrists have appeared in the popes ; real enemies to Christ, though pretending to act as His vicars. And now, forsooth, a so-called ecumenical council has decreed that the pope for the time being, no matter what his character may be, if he only speaks ex cathedra, and sits on the right tripod, is, in all matters pertaining to faith and morals, infallible !

3. The Spirit of Christ is the teacher of the renewed, and hence it is that they are not deceived by the many Antichrists. *And as for you, ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and know all things.* (As Christ was anointed with the Spirit, Acts 10 : 38, So ye have an anointing from Him, and as a consequence know all things.) *Chrisma* is strictly = *ointment*. Most take it by metonymy for anointing ; the material for the act of using it. But there is also a metaphor : ye have in you (ver. 27) a *chrisma*—*i.e.*, ye have the Spirit operating in your hearts, which is like an ointment for the cure of blindness. (Rev. 3 : 18.) His finger takes the truth revealed concerning the Christ, and with that ointment opens the eyes of the soul to behold the beauty and glory of Christ as the Redeemer. *And hence ye know all things ;* all the leading truths of divine revelation

centering in the person and work of Christ, and those appertaining to your walk in light and love, as well as the excellency and certainty of that eternal life which ye shall receive at Christ's approaching advent, vs. 21, 25, 28. The chrisma ye have from Christ (vs. 27, 28), *the Holy One*, it is a gift of His love. Rev. 3 : 7 ; Acts 2 : 33 ; Rom. 8 : 9 ; Gal. 3 : 13, 14. (Notes on 2 Pet. 1 : 3, 4.) So ye become Christians = anointed ones ; not simply followers of Christ in the historical sense of that word. (Notes on 1 Pet. 4 : 12-19.)

The anointing here spoken of is called by Paul an enlightening of the eyes of the mind. Eph. 1 : 18. It is not an internal immediate revelation of truth to individual Christians, differing from or additional to what is contained in the Holy Scriptures, but the ability to understand those Scriptures, 5 : 20 ; 4 : 6, resulting from the operations of the Spirit of Christ in the soul. Lk. 24 : 45.

Accordingly the Apostle adds : *I have not written to you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and (because ye know) that no lie is of the truth—i.e., that no falsehood or error originates from the Word of God, or is consistent with it.* This is a beautiful example of Apostolical humility, like that of Peter, 2 Ep. 1 : 12, 13, and of Paul, Rom. 15 : 14, etc. John, however, did not suppose that the anointing from the Holy One superseded his instructions, for the ointment with which the Spirit softens and opens the eyes of the mind is the Word written by prophets and apostles. To disparage the Scripture, then, to turn a deaf ear to faithful expounders of the Truth, is sin and folly.

Antichrists may dress up a false doctrine in such a manner that it will look like the truth to superficial observers, or negligent readers of Scripture. No error, however, proceeds from Divine revelation, but from the depraved ingenuity of Satan's ministers, and from the itching ears of those who dislike what God has revealed. 2 Tim. 4 : 3, 4.

But they who search the Scriptures as the Bereans did,

and pray for the anointing from the Holy One, will be kept from all deadly error ; for such even in the most trying times cannot be deceived. Mk. 13 : 22.

4. The principal error of the many Antichrists. The Apostle states the great lie or error that overturns all revealed truth, ver. 21, with what it involves, and declares that they are emphatically liars or Antichrists that maintain it : *Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ ? This is an Antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son. Every one that denieth the Son, neither hath he the Father ; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also.*

Lit. *the liar*, and *the Antichrist*—i.e., a liar and an Antichrist by way of eminence, or very eminent among anti-Christian teachers ; the article being generic, or used to indicate a genus or class, as in 5 : 5, the conqueror of the world, and the believer in Jesus as the Son of God. Cf. 2 Jno. ver. 7. In English we may use in such cases either the indefinite or the definite article : as, a conqueror or the conqueror, of the world. A good man, or the good man. See Mat. 12 : 35 ; 2 Cor. 12 : 12, Gr. That John here uses it to denote a class, is evident from what follows : *Every one that denieth*, etc.—i.e., whoever of the many liars or Antichrists does so. And to denote their eminent wickedness as deceivers, influenced as they are by the spirit that is to control the future Antichrist. 4 : 3.

They make the Truth an enigma and a fable who deny that Jesus is the Christ, or the Messiah promised and sent by God for man's redemption. 4 : 9, 10, 14. And in so doing they deny the Father and the Son. Owing to the inseparability of the Divine essence, the denial of the Son is a denial of the Father. It is also a rejection of the Father's testimony concerning Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and of His offices as such, 5 : 5-12 ; which is equivalent to saying that the Father can lie or deceive ; and so they have no God at all, but worship an idol of their own imagination, as the Mohammedans. On the other hand, they who confess that Jesus is the Christ, or God manifested in the flesh, adore

the Father also, and, in consequence of the anointing they have received, have the true God, the God revealed in Scripture, as their God.

What kind of a Messiah is revealed in Scripture? The Universal Church has given and still gives but one answer—namely, the God-man, the great prophet-priest-king. As to His human nature, the prophets describe Him as the Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, the Son of David, and the Son of Man. Gen. 3 : 15 ; 22 : 18 , (Gal. 3 : 16 ; Rom. 1 : 3 ; Mat. 1 : 1 ; Acts 2 : 30) ; Gen. 49 : 10 ; 2 Sam. 7 ; Ps. 89 : 35-37 ; Dan. 7 : 13. As to His divine nature, He is portrayed as the Son of God, the mighty God, the Father (possessor) of eternity. Ps. 2 ; Isa. 9. With respect to the union of the Godhead and manhood in His one person, it is always assumed when His two-fold natures are described, as in Isa. 9 : 6 ; Mic. 5 : 2 ; Zech. 13 : 7 ; cf. Jno. 1 : 1-18 ; 1 Jno. 1 : 1-4 ; Phil. 2 : 5-8 ; Rom. 1 : 3, 4.

The Theanthropic Messiah is described in His offices, undertaken for our salvation, as the Prophet like unto Moses, the Great Preacher of glad tidings to sinful men, Deut. 18 : 17-19 ; Acts 3 : 22, 23 ; Lk. 4 : 17, etc. ; Isa. 61 : 1-3 ; 49 : 1-6 ; 42 : 1-7 ; as the Priest and sacrifice, bearing our sins, and interceding for transgressors, Isa. 53 ; Ps. 22 ; as the Prince of Peace, David's royal successor, or the King of Israel, Isa. 9 : 6, 7 ; Jno. 1 : 49-51 ; Acts 2 : 30 ; Mic. 4 : 6-9, with Acts 1 : 6, 7 ; and as the Son of Man, the Lord and God of the whole earth, Dan. 7 : 13, 14, with Mat. 26 : 63, 64 ; Isa. 54 : 5 ; Ps. 2 ; Rev. 11 : 15. Also, as the everlasting Priest-King, or Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Ps. 110 ; Heb. 7. (Notes on Jas. 2 : 5.)

Now, to deny that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Father, is to deny Him to be such as He is described to be by prophets and apostles. And in this category must be included. (1.) Those who deny His eternal existence and Godhead, and the union of the divine and human natures in

His one person ; as Gnostics, Arians, and Humanitarians. (2.) Those who deny the reality of His human nature, as the Docetæ, or its integrity, as the Arians and Apollinarians. (Notes on 4 : 9, 10.) (3.) Those who deny Him as priest, and reject as irrational his expiatory sacrifice ; as the Socinians, the so-called Unitarians, and others. (4.) Those who deny Him as King and Judge, who scoff at His personal advent and reign on earth, 2 Pet. 3, or who ridicule and pervert what is written concerning the everlasting punishment of His implacable enemies. 2 Pet. 2. (5.) The Council of Trent recognizes the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, and His sacrifice for the sins of men. But for all that, during many ages, *the popes, prelates, and their so-called priests* have nullified these truths by their traditions. They practically deny the Father, although professing to act as His vicegerents, by constantly allowing a violation of the second commandment. And they deny the incarnate Son by their profane and monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation. They deny Him as priest, by impiously claiming to repeat in the mass the perfect sacrifice of Christ once for all offered, and by denying that He alone is our advocate with the Father. They deny Him as the prophet, by ascribing infallibility to the pope, and by putting apocryphal writings and traditions on a level with the Holy Scriptures. And they deny Him as the great king, by claiming to act as His vicars, before the resurrection and advent ; ignoring the fact that Christ the king neither has nor will have any vicars, but only coregents, ever subordinate to and controlled by Himself, when personally present on earth. Rev 20 : 4-6 ; 5 : 9, 10. They are, therefore, emphatically Antichrists, pretended friends, but real enemies of Christ ; a politico-fanatical army, not a part of the catholic or universal Church. (We are speaking of the papal hierarchy. See Rev. 18 : 4.)

5. Exhortations to adhere to the apostolic doctrine, and to abide in Christ. *As for you therefore, let that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you*, let the apostolic doc-

trine concerning Jesus as the Christ, and walking in the light as He requires, be in your hearts as its home.

The motives : 1. If that abide in you which ye heard from the beginning (then), *ye also shall abide in the Son and in the Father*, have true communion with them, or rest in them as the home and shelter of your souls ; so your intellect and love will be always fixed. Ps. 90 : 1 ; Mat. 11 : 27-30.

There can be no love to the Son and the Father without a knowledge of their internal relations to each other, so far as it is revealed ; nor without a knowledge of the incarnation of the Eternal Word, and of the love shown in the begun and continuous execution of the covenant of redemption. 1 : 1-4, 9 ; 2 : 1-3 ; 3 : 1 ; 4 : 9, 10. But this knowledge is revealed only in the Sacred Scriptures. And only at regeneration and subsequently does the Holy Spirit anoint the eyes of the mind so that they open and behold the greatness and reality of God's love to us in Christ. Then we never stray from, but abide in the Son and in the Father, as our home, shelter, and chief good.

There can be no love or communion with the Son and with the Father without obedience, springing from faith and repentance, or a reliance on the sacrifice and intercession of the incarnate Son. 1 : 6, 7, 9 ; 2 : 1, 2. But revealed truth is the great and only means of producing this holiness, repentance, and faith, and of increasing it, by the agency of the Spirit. 3 : 24 ; 4 : 13 ; Gal. 3 : 2 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 13-15.

If then we would abide in the Son and in the Father, revealed truth, and especially concerning the Christ, must abide in us. It must be the subject of our daily and prayerful meditation ; be introduced and welcomed by us as the only rule of faith and duty, as "the word of life" or the only means of increasing our likeness to the Son and the Father. Ignorance herein is the mother of superstition and fanaticism, but knowledge of eternal life. Jno. 17 : 3.

The Apostle puts the Son before the Father, in order to

show the sameness of the Divine essence, and to suggest that we abide in the Father only by abiding in the Son. 5 : 20 ; Jno. 14 : 6.

2. *And this is the promise which He Himself promised us, eternal life ;* or, that life which is everlasting. (The promise by metonymy for the thing promised.) 'The Apostle alludes to his gospel—*e.g.*, 6 : 40 ; 10 : 28-30.

The thing promised is a holy, everlasting life, not simply its beginning and development here, as in 5 : 12, 13, but its consummation in our complete nature at Christ's advent, ver. 28, Jno. 6 : 40 ; and in the eternal ages that are to follow. Mat. 25 : 46 ; Eph. 2 : 7.

The Promiser is our Redeemer, and He abideth faithful ; He cannot deny Himself. 2 Tim. 2 : 13. If then revealed truth abides in us, and we so abide in the Son and in the Father, we may be absolutely sure that we shall obtain at Christ's advent all that which is meant by eternal life, for He Himself has promised it.

3. Adherence to the apostolic doctrine will keep you from the snares of deceivers, and hence I state these things concerning Antichrists. *These things* (vs. 18-24) *I have written to you about those deceiving you—i.e., those who would deceive you ;* the desire and effort, not the success of their attempts, being intended, as is clear from vs. 20, 27. So Gal. 5 : 4, is in our idiom = whoever would be justified by the law.

Some hold it to be sufficient to preach Christ, without refuting prevalent anti Christian errors. But Christ's apostles by precept and example teach us otherwise. Others strangely say that if we fill a bushel with wheat, the chaff will not injure it. But the heart when unrenewed is like ground filled with poisonous roots ; and the errors and prejudices of men must be uprooted before the seed of the Word can take root, spring up and come to maturity. Error is not the mother of holiness. Tit. 1 : 1. And it is certain that errors concerning the person and work of Christ

are fundamental and fatal errors, ruining multitudes of souls. "Buy the truth, and sell it not."

4. While retaining in your hearts the word ye heard from the beginning, be cheered by the fact that the Spirit which ye received from Christ is your permanent and infallible teacher, and hence ye shall abide in Him. So we understand the fourth motive : *And as for you, the anointing which ye received from Him in you abideth, and no need have ye that any one should teach you ; but, as the same anointing teacheth you about all things, and is true and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye shall abide in Him.*

As and *even as* are logical particles = inasmuch as. Which ye *received* from Him, and even as it *taught* you—*i.e.*, which ye received at your regeneration, and from that moment taught you. The sense may be thus expressed : The Spirit which ye received from Christ is your constant teacher, and hence ye are not necessarily dependent on human instructors for a knowledge of Him ; but your intellect, will, and affections, shall be ever fixed on Him, inasmuch as the same Spirit, without any mixture of error, teaches you concerning all the leading truths of Scripture that pertain to Christ, and has done so ever since your regeneration. The sense instantly appears to an English reader, thus : *but ye shall abide in Him, inasmuch as the same anointing teacheth you, etc.*

This verse is a resumption and further elucidation by way of motive of that which is didactically expressed, ver. 20, and from both we learn that the Spirit is from Christ ; that His illuminating influence is given to all the renewed ; that He is their permanent and infallible teacher in all things relating to Christ ; and that He, by giving us this spiritual discernment, secures our abiding in Christ.

But they who infer from this that human teachers may be set aside, forget that Christ Himself appointed men to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and that His apostle speaks here only of the renewed, and

that the ointment of the Spirit is the word taught by prophets and apostles. Persons so anointed need no instruction from any anti-Christian teacher, but they often need to be reminded to let the word which they heard and clung to at their regeneration abide in them : the very thing which the Apostle is here doing. Cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 1, 2.

The next exhortation very naturally and beautifully follows : *And now*, the case being with you as just stated, *little children* (teknia = paidia, ver. 18), *abide in Him*. We abide in Christ as the home and fortress of our souls ; as branches in the vine, as the members of the body with the head ; and this by means of faith and love. For we know whom we have trusted, and we cannot know and trust in Him without loving Him, nor love Him without obedience. And the exhortation is, Persevere in this faith, love, and obedience ; never let your intellect, will, and affections stray from Christ, but stay in Him as your Redeemer and Lord.

The motive : *in order that, when He shall be manifested, we* (apostles as well as you disciples) *may have confidence* (or *boldness*), *and not be shamed away from Him at His coming* : that we may not be put to shame or disappointed in our expectations of eternal life, and be driven away from His presence, but have a holy and joyful boldness in that day. Abide in Christ, and walk in the light, as He requires, 1 : 5, etc., and then, when we see Him, all will be well.

There is no uncertainty as to Christ's *parousia* or personal coming, but the day and hour, or the exact time, is not revealed ; and hence the expression more literally rendered, *whenever He may be manifested*, as also in Col. 3 : 4. *Parresia* is = saying every thing, plainness, or frankness in speaking, Jno. 10 : 24 ; 18 : 20 ; hence holy boldness, confidence or joyful assurance, as here and in 3 : 21 ; 4 : 17 ; 5 : 14.

If we, with the prophetic and apostolic word in our hands, refuse to trust in and obey Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, then at His advent we shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt, and be banished from His presence. Dan. 12 : 2. Then the reckless courage of hardened trans-

gressors, of all anti-Christian deceivers, shall give way to unspeakable terror, and their present honors end in eternal infamy. But if we abide in Him as our Redeemer and Lord, we shall awake to eternal life, and appear before Him with a holy, joyful boldness.

18. B C S Antichrist, A K L the Antichrist, as c. t. *antichristoi polloi gegonasin*, either = many have become Antichrists (cf. Jas. 3 : 1, Gr.), or = many Antichrists have arisen, have begun to be or are existing ; which we prefer. 19. "That they were not all of us," is an inaccurate translation. For (1.) it turns "are" into "were." (2.) "Not all" would be expressed by *ou pantas*, without an intervening word or words, as in Mat. 19 : 11 ; Rom. 10 : 16. (3.) This translation makes *some* of the many Antichrists true Christians, which John has twice before in this verse explicitly denied. The Hebraism in our idiom is, *None of them are of us*. They (included in *eisin*) are not of us, and this holds true of all. (Winer, Sect. 26, and Lillie in loc.) 20. A C vg as c. t. ye know all things ; B S sah ye all know, but this looks like a correction from dogmatic motives, and the c. t. is also supported by ver. 27 ; syr ye know every man (discriminate every anti-Christian teacher?), in which it is singular, but ingenious. 23. A B C S syr vg every one that confesseth the Son hath the Father also, K L omit. 24. *And you* = and as for you ; nom. absolute, as in ver. 20. K L therefore, A B C S vg omit. 27. K L as c. t. shall abide, *meneite*, A B C S syr vg abide, *menete*. The internal evidence, the consolatory tone of the whole verse, is in favor of the c. t. B has *charisma* for the 1st *chrisma* (a mistake easily made by the eye) ; S cop *pneuma* for the 2d *chrisma* (correct as a scholium, but no part of the text) ; syr vg *chrisma* twice as c. t. A B L the same *chrisma*, vg sah his *chrisma*, S his spirit. 28. K L syr vg whenever he is manifested, B C S cop sah if he should be manifested. *Before him* (in Eng. Vers.) should be *away from him* (cf. Mat. 25 : 41 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 9 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 17 ; Rev. 6 : 16) : *constructio pregnans*.

B. *The Second Main Division of the Epistle*, in which the leading thought is, *God is Righteous, and he that doeth righteousness is a Child of God by regeneration and adoption*. 2 : 29 ; 5 : 5. The first main division shows how we may know that we have communion with God, the second how we may know that we are His children : it is the same great topic presented under these two aspects. (Here the third chapter should begin.)

“ If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

He is Righteous = God is Light. 1 : 5. *Every one that doeth righteousness* = every one that walketh in the light. 1 : 7. Is born : lit. *hath been begotten*, as is beyond debate from 5 : 1. So everywhere else in the epistle. 3 : 9 ; 4 : 7 ; 5 : 4, 18. (Cf. Jno. 1 : 13 ; 3 : 3, etc.) The being born is contained in the verb only by implication. And the passages just referred to prove that *of Him* is = of God ; out of or from Him as the primal source, agent, or efficient cause. (Notes on Jas. 1 : 18 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 3, 23 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 4.) “ The oneness of the Father and the Son is ever present to the mind of John, so that he frequently and easily passes from the one to the other without a special indication of such transition.” (Braune.) “ The righteousness of God is that attribute by which He wills and does all things which are conformable to His eternal law, prescribes suitable laws to His creatures, fulfils His promises to men, rewards the good, and punishes the ungodly.” (Hollaz.) It is that perfection of His nature by which God manifests His love of the right and His hatred of sin.

The righteousness of the regenerate is a conformity to God's righteousness ; which must be determined by His law, 3 : 4, and by Christ's perfect obedience, the spotless mirrors in which such righteousness is seen. 3 : 5-7. (Notes on 2 : 3-6.) It is an ever-growing conformity ; he *doeth* righteousness, that is the business of the renewed, his thoughts, words, and deeds, are always directed to what is right, or to become like God who has begotten him.

The doing of righteousness is a sure proof of regeneration. *We know* that God hath begotten us by the righteous thoughts, words, and deeds that flow from the soul as the proximate cause, and from God the Righteous One as the efficient cause. Thus the streams are traced up to the primal fountain. An assurance of our personal salvation necessarily follows, if we shrink not from drinking the cup of joy which the Father Himself presents to our lips,

3 : 1 ; Eph. 1 : 4-6 ; and which the incarnate Son confirms. Mat. 5 : 6, 8.

B K L am *hoti pas*, A C S vg sah *hoti kai pas*, but *kai* (if genuine) simply connects the premise with the conclusion : If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one also who doeth righteousness, etc.

§ 1. The greatness of the Father's love in adoption, the time of its full manifestation, and the holy tendency of our hope in Christ concerning it. 3 : 1-3.

CHAPTER III.

¹ Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God : therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is.

³ And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

The Father's wonderful and glorious love. *Behold what manner of love the Father hath given us*, consider how unspeakably great the gift of His love to us whom He hath begotten, 2 : 29, *in order that we should be called children of God*, for the purpose of introducing us into His family, or that we should be called children by the Father Himself, sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, 2 Cor. 6 : 18. *Love given* is = gift of love—namely, regeneration ; cf. 2 Tim. 1 : 9, a sign or demonstration of it : Consider what a wonderful proof of His love the Father hath given us in and by our regeneration. And to what end ? That we should be called children of God.

Adoption is an act of the Father in and by the incarnate Son whereby the renewed are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the children of God. The renewed alone are adopted, and their consent is signified by faith, or their reception of Christ as Redeemer and Lord. " But as many as received Him, to them gave He power (legal power or right) to become children of God (by adoption), to them that believe in His name ; who were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Jno. 1 : 12, 13 ; cf. Gal. 3 : 26.

1. The greatness of the Father's love herein appears (1.) From the fact that regeneration and adoption are manifestations in time of His love to us from eternity. Jno. 17 : 26 ; Eph. 1 : 5 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 9. (2.) That adoption is conferred through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Eph. 1 : 5 ; Gal. 4 : 4, 5 ; 1 Jno. 4 : 9, 10 ; Jno. 17 : 26 ; Eph. 1 : 5 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 9. (3.) That "the Spirit of Glory" prepares the renewed and adopted children of God for their inheritance, seals—*i.e.*, marks or designates them as the heirs ; and that His sanctifying influences in the soul constitute the earnest, the foretaste and pledge, of what is yet to be manifested. Eph. 1 : 13, 14 ; Rom. 8 : 14, etc. (4.) That they who are now renewed and adopted were in their unregenerate state no better in disposition and behavior than those left in their sins. Eph. 2 : 1, etc. ; Tit. 3 : 3, etc. (5.) That the privileges of God's children are unspeakably precious ; including while in the present body maintenance, education, and discipline, Mat. 6 : 24-34 ; Jno. 6 : 45 ; Heb. 12 : 5, etc. ; and when out of the body rest from sin and sorrow with Christ, 1 Pet. 4 : 1 ; Rev. 14 : 13 ; Phil. 1 : 23. And in the day of Christ eternal life in body and soul, and likeness to Christ in holiness and glory. Cf. Jno. 6 : 37-40.

2. It is not surprising that the greatness of the Father's love in adoption is unknown to the world : *therefore the world knoweth not us, because it knew not Him*. It is a reply to a latent objection : Many do not discern our character and privileges as children of God, nor His love in the matter. True, but they knew not the Eternal Son in our nature. It is no wonder then, if they know not us. *The world*, as John regards it, is the world in opposition to God and Christ, and to the renewed. 2 : 15-17 ; 5 : 19 ; 3 : 13. They have no relish for holiness, they care not for the favor of God, they mind earthly things ; and those who lived when Christ was on earth did not know or recognize Him as "the image of the invisible God," "as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Why then

should we think it strange if they know not us, considered as renewed and adopted children of God? What else could be expected from men of the world?

Because *it knew not Him*. In these words we have another sudden transition from the Father to the incarnate Son, and a manifest allusion to Jno. 1 : 10, last clause. There (vs. 10-13) it appears in the same connection as here, or in reference to adoption, which God bestows on believers in and by the Son of His love. If the pronoun *Him* referred to the Father, as most assume, John would have written thus : therefore the world knoweth not us, because it knoweth not Him. But the aorist *knew* refers to a fact of the past, as before explained.

3. The full manifestation of our adoption will be at Christ's advent, but the substance of it is already known : *Beloved* (loved by me as objects of God's love in Christ, 4 : 7-12), *now are we children of God*, our adoption by Him is a present reality, *and it is not yet manifested what we shall be*, our future glory, excellency, and privileges, as children of God, that is not yet brought to light or visibly demonstrated, neither to the world, Jno. 17 : 21-23, nor to us (Notes on 1 Jno. 2 : 2) ; *but we know that when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is*. Cf. Col. 3 : 4 ; Rom. 8 : 23 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 4, 10.

The glory of God's children in all its fulness will be manifested at the manifestation, or second appearing of Christ. The substance or cream of their excellency will consist in *likeness to Christ*, a faultless conformity to Him. *We shall be like Him* in our complete nature, body, and soul, and that to all eternity. The body of our humiliation will be conformed to the body of His glory, Phil. 3 : 21. It will be incorruptible, glorious—*i.e.*, with all the marks of the curse obliterated, powerful, and spiritual—*i.e.*, perfectly adapted in its whole structure to the sinless spirit, 1 Cor. 15 : 42-44.

Besides this conformity to our Theanthropic Redeemer in our complete nature, we shall be like Him in official station

and glory : He " the Firstborn," " the prince of the kings of the earth," and we His many brothers, both in holiness and glory. Rom. 8 : 29. As children of God and joint heirs with Christ, the risen saints are to be glorified with Christ in the renovated earth. Rom. 8 : 16-23 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 13 ; Rev. 5 : 9, 10 ; 20 : 4-6 ; 1 : 5, 6 ; 11 : 15 ; 21 : 23-26 ; 22 : 5.

We shall be like Him in body and soul, in holiness and bliss, in official dignity and glory, *but never equal to Him* " in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

The reason of the likeness : *because we shall see Him as He is*. Being ever with Him and seeing Him as He is, must, by the laws of a sinless mind, and by the greatly enlarged influences of the Spirit, tend to an everlasting approximation to Him in holiness, bliss, and glory.

4. The holy tendency of this hope : *And every one* (every regenerated and adopted child of God) *that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, as That One is pure*, makes daily and vigorous efforts to become holier and holier, in imitation of Christ, the perfect model or pattern of holiness. *This hope* —*i.e.*, of likeness to Christ, such as God's children will have at the appearing of their Saviour and Lord. *In Him*, literally, *on Him*, leaning on Him as the personal object, the promiser of eternal life and glory. Cf. Rom. 15 : 12 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 6, Gr.

Faith, hope, and love are twin sisters, all standing on the firm foundation laid in God's Word. Faith says, The promises of Him who cannot lie must be true ; His declarations are a demonstration to me of the glory about to be revealed. Hope exclaims, I long to enjoy that glory, and expect to obtain it. (Heb. 11 : 1 ; Rom. 15 : 13.) Love constantly adds, How can I bear to be driven away with shame from His presence, or lose a full reward in that day. 2 : 28 ; 2 Jno., ver. 8.

1. K L cop children of God, A B C S sah add and we = are and (so) we are ; which is either a mistake of a transcriber, writing twice the same words, or a scholium taken from ver. 2, Now are we children

of God. 2. K L syr cop but we know, A B C S vg sah omit but. Some translate, *But we know when it (i.e., what we shall be) shall be manifested*; but we prefer to take *he* as the subject of the verb, 2 : 28. And to say that *we shall see God as He is*, understand Him fully or look into His essence, as the phrase must be explained if metaphorically taken, is to make John declare that of which no created intellect is capable. (To see God, Mat. 5 : 8, is to discern very clearly His holiness, and to delight in it always and supremely.) Besides, *we shall see Him as He is*, refers to a visible manifestation, but God as He is can never be so manifested. It refers to the Theanthropos, and to Him alone. Cf. Tit. 2 : 13. He, the image of the invisible God, will visibly appear, in whom we are forever with the mind's eye to see God. And the exhibition and delineation of the divine perfections in the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, are and will be so accurate and complete that to all eternity there will be no need to repeat the question of Philip, Lord show us the Father. Jno. 1 : 18 ; 14 : 8-11 ; Col. 2 : 9 ; Heb. 1 : 3.

§ 2. Sin is lawlessness. But Christ was manifested to take away our sins ; and he that knoweth and believeth in Christ as the Redeemer abstains from sinning. The doing of sin, then, is the mark of the children of the devil ; but the doing of righteousness, the characteristic of the children of God. 4-10.

⁴ Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law : for sin is the transgression of the law. ⁵ And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins ; and in him is no sin. ⁶ Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not : whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. ⁷ Little children, let no man deceive you : he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. ⁸ He that committeth sin is of the devil ; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin ; for his seed remaineth in him : and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. ¹⁰ In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.

He only who doeth righteousness is a child of God, 2 : 29 ; he only who purifieth himself as Christ is pure has a well-grounded hope of being like Him at His appearing,

3 : 3. The present context is an elucidation of these thoughts, or a further description of the children of God as distinguished from the children of the devil.

The fourth verse seems to be a reply to a latent objection : You insist on perseverance in righteousness as a sure mark of God's children, and declare that perseverance in sin is a characteristic of the unrenewed ; but what is sin, and what is righteousness ? What is the infallible rule of judging concerning moral purity or impurity ? The answer is : That rule is not your own inclinations and passions, as scoffers assume, 2 Pet. 3 : 3 ; not the opinions and maxims of an ungodly world, Ps. 1 ; not the speculations of anti-Christian teachers who would deceive you, 2 : 26 ; 3 : 7, but the Law of God, and the sinless example of Christ.

1. A doer of sin, he who shows a lawless disposition, cannot be a child of God.

Lit. *Every one that doeth sin* (or *is doing sin*, as the present participle may be rendered, in order to distinguish it from the present tense immediately following), *doeth also lawlessness ; and sin is lawlessness.* *To do sin* or *lawlessness*, is in the style of John to practise it, to persist in known violation of God's law in thought, word, and deed. It is the same as to walk in the darkness. 1 : 6. This is evident, because he who doeth sin, sinneth as the devil, ver. 8. Because the present tense *doeth* expresses a habit, or the constant voluntary repetition of acts, internal and external. Because Christ Himself so explains it : " Every one that doeth sin is a slave of sin," Jno. 8 : 34, Gr., ever and wholly under its influence and dominion. *And sin is lawlessness—i.e.,* " any want of conformity to, or transgression of, God's law." It is the manifestation of a lawless disposition : the mental state or quality, by metonymy, for the exhibition of it. Every one that doeth sin *doeth also lawlessness ;* doeth that which manifests his lawless disposition, his opposition to God and His law. This passage is parallel in sense with Rom. 8 : 7. " The carnal mind is enmity

against God ; for it does not submit itself to the law of God ;" the unrenewed constantly disobey Him whom as Lawgiver they hate. The language of every sin is, Who is God that I should obey Him ? (Cf. 1 Jno. 5 : 17.) But a child of God is not lawless ; he does not set up his own will in opposition to that of God, but his delight is in the Holy One. (Notes on Jas. 2 : 8, etc.) Ps. 119 : 1-3.

Anomia, in Eng. Vers., is generally rendered *iniquity*, as in Mat. 13 : 41 ; 24 : 12 ; once *unrighteousness*, 2 Cor. 6 : 14 ; and here *the transgression of the law* ; but the literal translation is *lawlessness*, or *non-conformity to law*. The variety in translation, "committeth," "transgresseth," "doeth," is perfectly arbitrary and needless, and to an English reader perplexing : *doeth* or *is doing*, the literal meaning, should in each instance be used.

The Apostle lays down this brief and accurate description of the nature of sin as the foundation of what follows, not to affirm that the children of God do in fact obey the law perfectly, but to show that they do not live and move in sin as in their native element, like the children of the devil. (Notes on 2 : 3-6.)

Divine revelation is not only written, but also unwritten. Ever since the creation, in and by the things that are made, there has been and still is a manifestation or revelation to the reason of men concerning the eternal power and other perfections of God. And in their moral nature or conscience men have a revelation from God as to their duty, both to Him and to their fellow men. And hence even the unevangelized have no excuse for their impious idolatry and immorality. Rom. 1, 2. For whoever doeth sin, or makes it his daily business to disobey the law as it is made known to him, he is an enemy of God.

2. They only who abstain from sinning have a true knowledge of and faith in the Redeemer ; or they alone act in correspondence with the present design of His manifestation in our nature. We are all the children of God by faith

in Christ Jesus, as the Redeemer, 5 : 1, 6, but it is a faith unfeigned, working by love, and connected with the doing of righteousness. 2 : 29. *And ye know that That One was manifested to take away our sins ; and in Him is no sin.* In addition to what I have just said of the nature of sin as the manifestation of a lawless disposition towards God, ye know that the Eternal Living One who was with the Father became incarnate to take away our sins. *To take away sins* : the verb means either *to take up and bear—i.e.,* carry as a load, or *to take up and bear away—i.e.,* take away, wholly remove a load from another by taking it upon one's self. In this latter signification John uses it in his gospel, 1 : 29, " Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world : " and here, Ye know that He was manifested *to take away our sins—i.e.,* wholly remove the guilt of our transgressions, by bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. (Notes on 1 Pet. 2 : 24.) The Lamb of God, the Eternal Son in our nature, took upon Himself, and so bore away, our sins. *Sins*, by metonymy, for their inseparable adjunct, guilt, or liability to punishment. *Take away*, by a metaphor, is = wholly remove from us. The appeal then, is to that love or gratitude which is due to Christ, and which flows necessarily from the fountain of a renewed heart, a heart both knowing and loving the Great Redeemer. Cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 14-21 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 14, 15.

And in Him is no sin : He is perfectly sinless, and therefore, with His own consent and the Father's approbation, He alone was fully competent and had a most unquestionable right to take away the guilt of all our sins. Jno. 10 : 17, 18 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 1, 2 ; cf. Lev. 5 : 1 ; Isa. 53 : 12.

The design of the manifestation of the Eternal Word, as just explained, is consistent with the meaning of Jno. 1 : 29, and with what follows in this context. For some living in sin might say in their hearts, Well, I have faith in Him, I believe that He was manifested to take away my sins. To this latent delusion Christ's apostle answers thus : *Every*

one that abideth (or is abiding) in Him sinneth not (Ps. 119 : 3)—*i.e.*, every one who stays in Christ as the home and fortress of his soul, or whose faith and love constantly move towards and rest in Him, does not sin wilfully and habitually. Or, No true believer in Christ persists in sinning. *Sinneth not = doeth not sin.* (Notes on ver. 4.) Expressed in a positive form, He doeth righteousness, ver. 8. *Every one that sinneth* (is sinning) *hath not seen Him* (with the eye of faith), *neither hath he known Him*, Christ is practically a stranger to him : he has no true faith in Christ, nor any experimental knowledge of Him as Redeemer. *To see Christ* is here metaphorically used. It means to perceive His beauty or holy love as the Sinless Redeemer, the Theanthropic Saviour. But they who look into the mirror of the Word and behold His glory are gradually changed into the very image of Christ, as is natural to expect from the operations of Jehovah the Spirit in a renewed soul. 2 Cor. 3 : 18 ; Eph. 3 : 20 ; 1 Jno. 4 : 4 ; cf. Isa. 53 : 2 ; 3 Jno., ver. 11.

3. The doing of righteousness is indisputable proof or characteristic of God's children, and the doing of sin a manifest proof of being the children of the devil ; which is illustrated as follows :

(a) They who teach otherwise are deceivers. *Little children, let no one deceive you*, or lead you astray in this particular. Whoever, then, directly or by necessary implication, affirms that our regeneration can be proved without the doing of righteousness, is a false teacher ; as all antinomians, under whatever name they may hide themselves.

(b) A child of God has a moral likeness to Christ. *He that doeth righteousness is righteous, as That One is righteous.* Christ as to His divine nature is Light, is righteous, absolutely so, or Holy as the Father and the Spirit. But John here speaks of Him as incarnate. And the incarnate Son when on earth demonstrated the spotless holiness of His human soul by perfect obedience to the law ; and now, at

the right hand of God in the heavenly worlds, crowned with glory and honor, He still doeth righteousness ; and in His human nature to all eternity, will persevere in so doing. 1 Cor. 15 : 28. He indeed is righteous, pre-eminently, everlastingly.

And he that doeth righteousness is righteous, *as He is righteous*. Not in the same degree, but in the quality or nature of the righteousness ; since he is ever doing it, from supreme love to God, and to promote His glory, and so righteous like Christ. While endeavoring to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing" he walks in the same path that Christ did ; following Him with unequal steps, but still acting like His Redeemer and Lord.

(c) He who persists in sinning bears a likeness to the devil. *He that doeth* (is doing) *sin is of the devil ; because the devil sinneth from the beginning*. He is a child of the devil, because he imitates him in sinning ; heartily concurring with him in his opposition to God and Christ, to truth and righteousness ; listening to the suggestions of the father of lies, trampling on God's most holy law, practically justifying the great accuser of God and of the holy in his rebellion, and adhering to him and his faction until the end. *From the beginning* refers not to the time of his creation, but to the beginning of his rebellion. Ever since his temptation of our first parents in Eden, and from his first violation of God's law, his whole life has been one continued course of sinning. Cf. Jno. 8 : 44. And they who imitate the first and greatest sinner in the universe must be his children.

(d) They who abstain from sinning, and they only, act in accordance with one great ultimate design of our Saviour's incarnation. *For this was the Son of God, manifested* (namely), *to break down the works of the devil*—i.e., to conquer Satan and destroy all his power and authority in this world, in which he is as yet the great rebel and usurper. (See notes below.)

To break down, as the verb is rendered, Eph. 2 : 14 ;

Lit. *to loosen*, as animals tied, Mk. 11 : 2, 4, 5 ; or sandals, Jno. 1 : 27 ; to loosen a seal, break it open, Rev. 5 : 2. Hence, *to break down*, or *destroy*, loosen by separating the parts, when the allusion, as here, is to buildings or fortresses. Cf. Eph. 2 : 14 ; Jno. 2 : 19. In 1 Cor. 3 : 13-15, *work* is = superstructure. Cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 10. *The works* on it. Now, *to break down the works of the devil*, is used by substitution for the complete overthrow of his power and authority on earth, no matter how strongly and craftily resisted by him and all his adherents. At the beginning of our race he successfully tempted man made in the image of God, and so laid the foundation on which all his other works have been built. Sin and the Curse, then, must be wholly removed from our world before the works of the great accuser will be demolished.

The incarnate Son of God has already given indications of His future triumph over Satan by the power of His Gospel in many human hearts, 2 Cor. 10 : 4, 5 ; Rom. 1 : 16 ; but sin and the curse still prevail in our world, and the design here spoken of will not be accomplished, the head of the great serpent will not be crushed, until the Son of God is sent the second time for the restoration of all things on earth, according to the uniform teaching of prophets and apostles. Acts 3 : 19-21 ; Rom. 16 : 20 ; Rev. 20 : 1-3 ; and vs. 7-10.

Now, however, he who doeth sin runs to Satan, and puts himself within his works ; but he who doeth righteousness runs to Christ, and stands behind His shield. The latter is of God, and belongs to Christ's army ; the former is of the devil, and fights under his banner. He who doeth sin shows that he wishes the devil to conquer ; but he that doeth righteousness proves that he longs for the complete overthrow of Satan, and the triumph of the incarnate Son of God.

(e) A child of God does not persist in sinning, and why it is morally impossible for him to do so. *Every one that hath*

been begotten of God doeth not sin, because His seed in him abideth ; and he cannot sin, because of God he hath been begotten. (Notes on 1 Pet. 1 : 23 ; Jas. 1 : 18, 21.) Hath been begotten and the abiding of God's seed are metaphors, taken from human generation. In 2 : 20, 27, the illuminating influences of the Spirit are described as an anointing for the cure of mental blindness ; but here his purifying influences are designated as the permanent seed of God in the soul, or as the efficient cause of constant holy activity. And the sense is, Every one who has received a holy disposition from God sins not wilfully and habitually, does not make sinning his business as the devil and his children, because the Spirit of God is ever at work in his soul. 3 : 24. *And he cannot sin*, as just said, *because he hath been begotten of God ;* of God the Righteous One, 2 : 29, who begets children in His own likeness : life from God assimilating him to God. Vs. 14, 15 ; Eph. 4 : 18, 24. It thus appears that this passage is an unmistakable proof of the perseverance of the saints in holiness.

In this are manifest (conspicuous) the children of God, and the children of the devil : herein or hereby—i.e., by perseverance in holiness or in sin, the real character of both is most clearly exhibited.

Men are either the children of God or the children of the devil : there is no middle class. This is the anthropology taught by Christ's apostle.

7. A C *paidia*, B K L S *teknia*. 9. *The seed of God* is not the Word or the Gospel. The Gospel is that through which His seed is imparted ; but His seed is the influences of the Holy Spirit given at regeneration, and ever after continuing in the soul : as we have more fully explained it on 1 Pet. 1 : 23. *To take away our sins*, ver. 5, most explain as referring to sanctification. We have given our reasons for referring it to justification ; but these are inseparable benefits, although distinct in their nature. *To take away our sins*, and *to destroy the works of the devil*, are not, as some suppose, equivalent expressions. The Son of God, as here stated, was manifested in the flesh for a twofold purpose. (1.) *To take away our sins*, as above explained ; or to procure our complete justification before God. This justification is proved by

our sanctification, or our abiding in Christ, which is by faith, working by love and obedience, ver. 6. Now, justification and sanctification are *present benefits* of the covenant of Redemption, arising from Christ's work as the Propitiation for our sins, and our Advocate with the Father. (2.) He was also manifested *to break down the works of the devil*; which is still *future*, and the object of hope. "Distinguish the times, and the Scripture will be harmonious." *The works of the devil*; buildings or fortresses such as he has erected—*e.g.*, the vast systems of pagan idolatry, Mohammedan delusion, and corrupted Christianity. Behind these works of the devil all the civil and ecclesiastical despots of the earth fight against God and Christ, and against those who are of God and like Christ. (Doddridge in loc.)

§ 3. Love to the brethren is a special and essential manifestation of righteousness, and hence a sure proof of regeneration (2 : 29), while hatred to them is a demonstration of spiritual death. 3 : 10-15.

¹⁰ Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. ¹¹ For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. ¹² Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. ¹³ Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death. ¹⁵ Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer : and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Every one that doeth not righteousness is not of God, and in particular he that loveth not his brother. That he is not a child of God is evident : 1. For he knowingly and constantly disobeys God : *because this is the message that ye heard from the beginning*, the authoritative injunction known to you from the first proclamation of the Gospel, 2 : 7-11, *that we should love one another* ; a message promulgated by Christ's legates, not to be in any way disregarded, but to be obeyed. Love to the brethren, then, is love to them from a regard to the authority of God and Christ ; which is an essential part of righteousness. Love to the brethren is

that at which we should ever aim, hitting nearer and nearer the mark ; it is a debt which we must be always discharging, and never suppose that it is fully paid. Rom. 13 : 8 ; 1 Thes. 3 : 12, 13 ; 4 : 9, 10 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 22, etc.

2. Because he who loveth not his brother is, like Cain, a child of the Wicked One, and associated in mind and heart, not with true believers, but with the world which hates the righteous. *Not as Cain, who was of the Wicked One, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him ? Because his works were wicked* (like those of the wicked one), *but his brother's righteous.* By supplying *who*, the sense of the original becomes conspicuous to the English reader. (Cf. Jno. 6 : 58, Gr.) But the sense may be exhibited by a literal translation, without supplying any thing : We should love one another. *Not as Cain : of the Wicked One he was, and slew his brother ; and wherefore,* etc.

Cain, the first Rationalist in the world, brought an offering to the Most High ; not such an one as was required, not one indicative of faith in the promised deliverer, or of sorrow for sin, but one simply expressive of gratitude for the daily bounties of God's providence. That offering was justly rejected, because Cain did not act as became a sinner who had received a revelation from God as to the Saviour, and the mode of worship by which to exhibit faith and repentance. Heb. 11 : 4.

Cain, however, was very wroth, and his countenance fell. Anger against the Holy God was mingled with envy ; a sickness of heart at the sight of his brother's prosperity, or favor with God. The ambition of Cain was also deeply wounded, since he loved the pre-eminence, and feared he might lose it.

Although Cain could not deny that Abel was righteous, yet he, in a satanic fit of unbelief, envy, pride, and ambition, slew his own brother ; slew him, because God showed His love to that brother in preference to himself ; slew him, because he was righteous, or had faith in God and love to

Him, and proved it by his obedience ; slew him, and persisted in justifying the act, and the disposition from which it originated. (Gen. 4.)

When we do not love, hate and other evil passions crowd at the door of the heart, and rush in ; the moral ugliness of which mental state the Apostle glances at, by referring to an example of one of God's professed worshippers, the most ancient in the world, and exceedingly appropriate.

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hateth you. Cf. Jno. 15 : 17-19. So it has been ever since the Fall, so it is now, and so it will be till Christ again appears. Mat. 24 : 9, 10 ; Gal. 4 : 29 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 4-7 ; Rev. 17.

3. He only who loves his brother is a child of God by regeneration : *As for us*, who belong not to the world just described, *we know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.* (Jno. 5 : 24.) To pass out of death into life, is a substitution for regeneration, or the mental transition from a state of sin into a state of holiness. We know that this has taken place in our case, *because we love the brethren* ; such love being an invariable effect of regeneration. 1 Pet. 1 : 22, 23. Here is an infallible test, and one easily applied ; and hence ignorance as to our regeneration admits of no excuse ; for consciousness must testify whether or not such love is in us, and memory will remind us how it has been manifested, if manifested at all. But may we not deceive ourselves in applying the test ? Not if we honestly catechise our conscience by what is written. 1 Jno. 3 : 16, 17 ; 5 : 1-5.

He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. To abide in death, is a substitution for remaining in a state of sin, or unrenewed, even after a profession of Christianity. If a brother in Christ is not loved, the heart must be cold or indifferent towards him, which is hatred in the germ, and sprouting. It is self-evident that such an one abideth in death. Hence the Apostle continues : *Every one that hateth his brother is a murderer* : which is a metaphor, and the

sense is, He is in disposition like a murderer ; hatred being the proximate internal cause of murder. Mat. 5 : 21, etc. *And ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him ;* that no one who cherishes hatred against his brother, no heart or hand murderer hath, while in that state, eternal life abiding in him ; which is another substitution for the possession of a permanent holy disposition. (Notes on 3 : 9.)

We either love or hate. And he who hates his brother is a murderer in desire and intention. Before he is well aware of it, he wishes the hated person dead, or banished to some far-off part of the world, even if he uses no violence towards him with his own hand, or that of others. But God looketh at the heart, and as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. 1 Sam. 16 : 7 ; Prov. 23 : 7.

10. The subjective negative, here and in ver. 14. The meaning may be thus given : every one who is conscious of not doing righteousness ; and he who is conscious of not loving his brother : or, those of whom we so suppose.

11. A B K L vg message, *aggelia*, which is unquestionably genuine ; C S syr cop sah promise, *epaggelia*, a remarkable instance of the inaccuracy of some of the weightiest authorities : see on 1 : 5. John is peculiar in sometimes using *hina* as a sort of complement to the demonstrative pronoun ; but here *hina* is telic, not ecclatic, as has been shown above.

12. The translation, *Not as Cain was of the wicked one*, is decidedly strained. But by translating and punctuating as above, the thought is lucidly expressed. And even they who insist that nothing need be supplied to their clumsy translation, are forced to do what they hold to be needless.

13. " If the world hate you " should be, " If the world hateth you : " if with the indicative taking the fact for granted.

14 C K L syr cop as c. t. he that loveth not the brother, A B S vg he that loveth not.

15. *Murderer*, literally *mankiller*, as in Jno. 8 : 44, but nothing is gained by using the latter word instead of the former. *The knowledge* spoken of in ver. 14, is not a probable conjecture, but a clear discernment of one's real character as renewed ; and it is not acquired by any special revelation to individuals, but originates from the possession of

Christian love ; the nature of which is described in the two following verses with a holy animation and the greatest perspicuity.

§ 4. A description of unfeigned brotherly love, with an exhortation to the cultivation of the same. 16-24.

¹⁶ Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us : and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ? ¹⁸ My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue ; but in deed and in truth. ¹⁹ And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. ²⁰ For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God. ²² And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. ²³ And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. ²⁴ And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

1. The nature of unfeigned Christian love. The Apostle is not speaking of God's love to us, but of our love to the brethren. (By supplying *of God*, the sense is obscured, if not wholly lost to some English readers.) We cannot love any without being conscious of it ; still a soul trembling with holy self-vigilance is not satisfied with the testimony of consciousness alone, but eagerly asks, How can I know that the love of my heart is a truly holy love, and not a mere natural affection arising from natural causes ? (Notes on 5 : 2.) The Apostle answers thus : It is genuine when it is like that of Christ, when it proceeds from love to God, and is practically manifested.

True Christian love is like that of Christ ; shown, if necessary, even by death. *Hereby have we known love*, what love is, *because That One laid down His life for us : we also ought*

to lay down our lives for the brethren. Cf. Jno. 15 : 12, 13. The Eternal Son, by clothing Himself with our nature, became most truly our brother, and so He ever remains. 1 : 1-3 ; Heb. 2 : 11-14. In that nature, or as our brother, He who was with God, and was God, laid down His life for us. Our brother and our God so loved us ! No truer, greater, or more disinterested love is conceivable, and none that so touches and attracts the hearts of God's children. Accordingly, the Apostle immediately adds, We also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren ; willingly die, if necessary, for their protection and deliverance.

When the hatred of the world (ver. 13) breaks out and appears in murderous persecutions, those disciples who are selected by the wicked as the special objects of their fury should not hesitate to die cheerfully for the benefit of the rest of their brethren. (Notes on 1 Pet. 3 : 14-18.) So the edge of their fury may be blunted, and many of the flock spared ; but if not, *we*, the special objects of the malice of the impious, *ought* to lay down our lives for the brethren ; for so did Christ. He indeed never put Himself in the way of danger, but when " His hour was come " He most readily died for us. Hence, if our love is like His, we will not try to escape death, when a flight would tend to the dishonor of Christ, or melt the hearts of the many with fear.

Christians in times of persecution are required from love and gratitude to Christ to die willingly for the benefit of their brethren ; but it is morally impossible that their death, like His, can be a propitiation for their own sins, or that of others. (Notes on 2 : 2 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 13.) And here the Apostle speaks of Christ's death for us as the most glorious specimen and highest example of True Brotherly Love ; that by which we have known what love is, and which we must imitate, when persecuted unto death. (Cf. notes on 1 Pet. 3 : 14, 15.)

Unfeigned brotherly love proceeds from love to God, and

is shown by deeds of practical benevolence. *But whoever hath the world's goods, and seeth his brother having need, and shutteth up his bowels from him* (bars the door of his heart and turns away from him), *how abideth the love of God in him?*

The *bowels*, like our word *heart*, are often spoken of in Scripture as the seat of the affections, especially of tender love and pity. Lk. 1 : 78, Gr. ; Col. 3 : 12 ; Phil. 1 : 8. Hence to shut up the heart (and turn) away from one, is a substitution for suppressing by an unholy will all practical manifestations of love and mercy. *The world's goods*, lit. *the world's life*—i.e., means of living ; that which believers have in common with the men of the world.

The Apostle speaks of one who has property, either in abundance, or what is sufficient for his present sustenance. It is also assumed that he has a personal knowledge of his brother's unhappy condition ; and, after beholding his distress, deliberately shuts up the door of his heart, and turns away, without supplying his necessary wants. Then the apostolic decision in the case is given in an animated question : How abideth the love of God in him ? How is it possible even for the most indulgent to suppose that love to God is a permanent operative principle in his soul ? Jas. 2 : 15, 16 ; Heb. 6 : 10. And thus are we taught that unfeigned brotherly love not only bears a likeness to that of Christ, but also originates from love to God. And now let us apply the test and ask, *Have we passed from death into life ? Or, do we love the brethren ?*

2. An exhortation to the cultivation of this genuine Christian love. *Little children* = beloved, ver. 21, *let us not love with a word, nor with the tongue, but in deed and truth* : as to the mode of manifesting our love, let it not be by a bare enunciation of words with the tongue, which is a hypocritical pretense, but let it appear in true practical benevolence, or move in that as in its native element. This exhortation is enforced by a statement of its blessed consequences :

(1.) *Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.* By the possession and cultivation of this unfeigned love we know that we are renewed, and so we shall succeed in quieting our consciences in His presence ; or appear confidently before Him as His children, ver. 21.

We are of the truth = we are children of the truth ; as "to be of God," and "to be of the devil," vs. 8, 10. We are like children and the truth is our mother, but God is our Father. 2 : 29 ; 3 : 9 ; 5 : 1. He renews and sanctifies us by the direct efficiency of the Spirit ; but His influences, in the case of adults, are inseparably connected with the truth as the instrumental cause or medium through which they are communicated to the soul. *The heart* in Scripture refers to the mind, with all its faculties and capacities—*e.g.*, it is used of the intellect, as to understand with the heart, Jno. 12 : 40 ; of the sensibilities or passions, Jno. 14 : 1 ; 16 : 6, 22 ; of the disposition and will, Ezek. 26 : 36 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 5. Also, of the conscience, as here, and Heb. 3 : 8, 15 ; 1 Sam. 24 : 5. "David's heart smote him." "To harden the heart" is to blunt the edge of the conscience by persisting in unbelief and disobedience.

Lit. *And* (as a consequence of knowing that we of the truth) *we shall persuade our hearts before Him.* To persuade the heart is to quiet the conscience, make it friendly, or stop its upbraidings. So the metaphor is best explained. Cf. Acts 12 : 20, Gr. ; Gal. 1 : 10. And it is by the possession and cultivation of unfeigned brotherly love that peace of conscience is secured. Faith, indeed, is presupposed as existing, ver. 23 ; 5 : 1 ; but here it is declared that an approving conscience is an invariable effect of sincere Christian love. Cf. 1 : 7, 9 ; Heb. 10 : 19-22.

What a precious consequence of unfeigned brotherly love is a pacified conscience ! To stand before the Father, conscious that we truly love all the other members of the family with whom we are acquainted, and ever aim to promote

their welfare with the tender affections of Jesus Christ ; what a delightful tranquillity of soul it produces, what a blessed, gracious recompense !

The Apostle next illustrates the importance of this criterion of regeneration, or the validity of the decision given by an enlightened conscience in the matter. That verdict, whether against or for us, God Himself ratifies. *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things :* if our conscience condemn us for the absence of this love, so will the infinitely greater Giver and Lord of the conscience, the omniscient lawgiver and judge. *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not—i.e., for the absence of genuine Christian love, then have we confidence towards God,* a holy, humble boldness in drawing nigh to Him as His children : *parresian pros ton theon.* Cf. 5 : 14.

(2.) God, because of their childlike obedient spirit, answers all the prayers of unfeigned lovers of the brethren. Cf. Jno. 15 : 7. *And whatever we ask, we receive from Him.* This is not an hyperbole, for they who are of the Truth and lovers of the brotherhood, never knowingly ask their Father in Christ for a single unholy thing, never ask for any gift to consume it in the indulgence of sinful desires. John does not affirm that no unholy desires exist within, but he takes it for granted that such desires are hated and kept down, and that we receive from God whatever we ask as His children, or in conformity with His will. Holy souls, longing to be like their Father and their Redeemer, loving their brethren with a love akin to that of Christ, actually have all their holy desires gratified even now and here ; or they receive such a supply of the Spirit of Christ Jesus as they are enabled to contain, a constant growth in all the graces of the Spirit adapted to their mental constitution, peculiar work and station, whether as privates or officers in Christ's army.

Why such receive whatever they ask : *because we keep His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight ;* because, from a regard to His authority

as God, we ever strive to obey Him, and, from love to Him as our Father in Christ, we gladly do what meets with His approbation. (Notes on 2 : 3, etc. ; 2 : 29 ; 3 : 7, etc.) Our persons and services are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest of our profession. They are also acceptable as the work of the Holy Spirit who forms us as a temple for God, giving us a believing, loving, and obedient disposition, making us perfect in every good work to do God's will, working in us what is well pleasing in His sight. 1 Pet. 2 : 5 ; Heb. 13 : 20, 21. The prayers of such must be and are answered. Rom. 8 : 26, 27 ; Jude, ver. 20.

The precepts especially intended : *And this is His commandment*, the principal one defining the duty of Gospel-hearers as to the first table of the law, 5 : 5-12, a compliance with which is peculiarly pleasing to God, Jno. 6 : 29, *that we should believe in* (direct our faith to) *the name of His Son Jesus Christ ; and love one another, as He gave us commandment*, the principal precept relating to the second table, and to be observed in the manner which Christ enjoined. (Notes on 2 : 7, 8.) *The name* by metonymy for the person as manifested. (Notes on 2 : 12.) *The name of His Son Jesus Christ* means the Redeemer Himself as the revealed Theanthropic Messiah. Cf. 5 : 1, 5, 13 ; 2 : 22, 23 ; 4 : 2, 3. This faith in Christ and love to Christians always co-exist in the renewed soul.

(3.) Believers in Christ and lovers of the brethren have a permanent moral union, a fellowship of love, with God, through the sanctifying operations of the Spirit, that unspeakable gift of His grace. (Notes on 1 : 3 ; 2 : 5.) *And he that keepeth His commandments* (especially those just stated), *abideth in Him, and He in him ; and hereby we know that He abideth in us* (namely), *from the Spirit which He gave us*, at our regeneration. God abideth in us as His temple, adorning our souls with the beauty of holiness by the Spirit, and so He shows His love to us. We abide in

Him as the fortress, refuge, and home of our souls, and so we show our love to Him.

Who thinks enough of God's unspeakable love to us in Jesus Christ His Son? Who is grateful enough for "the love of the Spirit," so wonderfully proved in purifying our naturally depraved hearts?

But the operations of the Spirit in the soul are invisible, and cannot by consciousness be distinguished from the operations of our own minds. How then can we know that God has given us the Spirit, and that God abides in us, and we in Him? Only by *the effects* of the Spirit's agency, such as faith in Christ and love to those who are like Christ.

16. A B C S *theinai*, which is genuine, since the reference is to what is done once for all, not to an act going on, as c. t. K L. B S etc., the love = love, since abstract nouns in Greek generally take the article; syr his love, vg the love of God. The first reading is unquestionably genuine; the two latter are mistaken explanations of the former.

17. *Ap' autou* (turns) away from him. Cf. 2 : 28. Constructio pregnans.

18. K L syr vg my little children, A B C S little children : S with word and tongue; A B C K L with the tongue; A C L S *en*. The datives designate the manner and instrument, *en* the element or sphere in which.

19. K L vg we know, A B C S cop sah we shall know. 20. B C K L I have 2 *hoti*, but A vg cop sah omit. If not genuine, it is difficult to account for its insertion. Alford explains it thus : (It is) *because*; an emphatic repetition. So also Robinson and others. Lücke : (we know) *that*. We thus : *the fact* (is) *that* : *Because if our heart condemn us, the fact is that God is greater*, etc. But Eng. Vers. gives the sense with clearness and accuracy, and with no clumsiness. 23. *Hina* here seems to be a complement of *this*, but we hold it to be telic, as in 3 : 11; 5 : 3. But either way, the sense remains substantially the same. *To onomati*, dative of reference = *eis to onoma*, 5 : 13.

24. *Ek tou pneumatos*, from or by the Spirit, indicates the source of the knowledge described in the preceding clause. *En touto* refers to what follows; an intermingling of two constructions.

CHAPTER IV.

§ 5. Righteousness is exhibited by adhering to God's revelation concerning His Son, and by testing and rejecting the false prophets. 1-6. They who are children of God must and do believe what the Father has declared concerning the Christ, and oppose and expose those who pretend to be inspired of God ; which is an integral part of righteousness. (2 : 29.)

¹ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God : because many false prophets are gone out into the world. ² Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God : ³ and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God : and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come ; and even now already is it in the world. ⁴ Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them : because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. ⁵ They are of the world : therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. ⁶ We are of God : he that knoweth God heareth us ; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

This paragraph is not only connected with the leading thought of this second division of the epistle, as above indicated, but also with 3 : 23, 24. Here faith in the name of His Son Jesus Christ is further elucidated, as that which must ever be maintained against all the assaults of false prophets.

1. *Beloved*, ye who have this faith, and in whom God abideth by the Spirit, *believe not every spirit*, believe not every one who claims to be inspired. *But try the spirits*

whether they are of God: test, or put to the proof, those who claim to be inspired, in order to discern whether their teachings originate from God, or from the Spirit of truth, ver. 6. Cf. 1 Thes. 5 : 21 ; Rev. 2 : 2 ; *spirit* (and *the spirits*) by metonymy for a spiritual or inspired man, one so professing ; as in 2 Thes. 2 : 2. Cf. 1 Cor. 14 : 37 ; Hos. 9 : 7.

Faith is not credulity, and it is essentially connected with knowledge. Jno. 17 : 3 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 20, 27. And here implicit faith in teachers who pretend that the Spirit of truth is resident in them alone, to the exclusion of private Christians, is forbidden. To believe as they believe, and because they do so, is to put them in the place of God, and to take their dogmas as oracles of the Holy Spirit.

Some say that disputes concerning what is revealed in Scripture, and especially concerning Christ, will never cease, if private Christians must and ought to decide for themselves in the matter. We reply (1.) It is revealed that the apostasy from the truth will increase and go on until the second coming of our Lord. 2 Thes. 2 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 3 ; Rev. 19 : 20. (2.) Diversities of opinion among professed Christians do not result from obedience to the precept before us, but from a disregard to it. And no diversities of this kind can blot out the distinction between truth and error, or nullify a plain Divine command. (3.) This precept relates especially to what is revealed concerning the incarnation of the Eternal Son (the biblical doctrine of the Trinity necessarily connected with it), and His expiatory sacrifice, vs. 2, 3, 9, 10, 15, in which all who at all deserve the name of Christians are agreed, and which is the life of their souls. Jno. 6 : 51-58. (4.) The Apostle takes it for granted that it is the duty of Christ's disciples to try the spirits ; for this command is not given to officers of Christian congregations residing in their parishes, nor to them when assembled in synods or councils, but to private Christians generally. (5.) They who are afraid of all controversy, and will not try the spirits, are already sleeping in the arms of the great deceiver. 5 : 19.

If it be said that private Christians are not competent to judge of what is revealed, owing to the great diversity of their intellectual endowments, we reply that there is a similar diversity in their regularly commissioned teachers ; that many of the taught are in natural acumen fully equal to their teachers ; that the Apostle refers to believers in whom God abides by the Spirit, who frees them from prejudice, and opens their eyes to perceive what is written concerning the Christ. 4 : 4 ; 5 : 20 ; 2 : 20, 27. Surely, such are able to try the spirits as here directed.

The age in which we live is distinguished by great contentions concerning Jesus Christ, even infidels writing romantic novels which they call *Lives of Christ*. Never, since the death of Paul and John, was it more necessary than now to try the spirits. "Let no one deceive you by any means."

2. The motive is derived from the necessity of such trial : *because many false prophets have gone out into the world ; because many pretending to be inspired of God have for some time past until now been publicly at work as teachers.* See Acts 13 : 6-12 ; 20 : 29, 30 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 13-15.

A prophet (lit. *a forespeaker*, spokesman) is one who speaks in the name of God and by His Spirit ; like a servant or interpreter who stands before his sovereign, and utters or writes what he orders. 1 Ki. 17 : 1 ; Ex. 7 : 1, 2 ; 6 : 28-30 ; 4 : 15-16 ; Num. 12 : 6. (Notes on Jas. 5 : 10 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 10, etc. ; 2 Pet. 1 : 19-21.) *A false prophet* is one who pretends so to speak : also, one who speaks in the name of false gods, Deut. 18 : 20 ; in the former case, claiming to be an interpreter of the Spirit of God, in the latter, of some deified spirit, either that of departed men, or of demons—that is, angels. Hence John in this context speaks of him that is in the world, and in the false prophets, and describes that spirit as the spirit of Antichrist, the spirit of error. If false prophets have any inspiration, or receive any aid from created spirits in devising and teaching their falsehoods, as the Apostle appears to take for granted ("the spirit of Antichrist" as opposed to "the Spirit of God," "the spirit of

Error" as opposed to "the Spirit of Truth"), it must be from those who have fallen from their original integrity. This may be called a satanical or demonical inspiration, akin to that which is to control the coming Antichrist.

It is well known that Swedenborg supposed that he conversed with angels—*i.e.*, as he imagined, departed human spirits ; and that the Lord had chosen him as His seer to give an inspired explanation of the Holy Scriptures ; which explanation is a virtual denial of their literal or grammatical sense, for he views that as only a stepping-stone or gateway leading to the concealed, internal, or so-called spiritual meaning. This is the mystical mode of Origen, handled in all gravity by a learned and amiable monomaniac. But where and what are the proofs of his claims ? His own assertions in his own writings. What can be more preposterous ? We would as soon believe that Gabriel brought to Mohomet the leaves of the Koran.

Modern Spiritualists, or necromancers, profess to receive communications from departed spirits ; but if so, what is the character of those spirits, and do they come from Paradise or Tartarus ? How absurd and sinful to reject the Prophets and Apostles, and pin one's faith on spirits who are deceivers, and doctrines proceeding from demons ! Lk. 16 : 31 ; I Tim. 4 : 1, Gr.

The late Vatican Council has decreed that the pope, when speaking *ex cathedra* on faith and morals, is infallible—*i.e.*, *the false prophet*, by way of eminence. Rev. 19 : 20. Indeed, the officers of the Romanists, from the highest to the so-called priest, virtually claim to be infallible or inspired as teachers ; and that the truth can only be received from them, under the penalty of everlasting condemnation, if rejected as they state it. And advocates of a priestly and sacramental or ritual religion are walking in their footprints. Teachers, too, of every sort are abroad in the world, boasting of being the right guides to the everlasting kingdom. But be not deceived ; believe not any and every one professing to be wiser and holier than Prophets and

Apostles, but try the spirits whether they are of God, or from Satan.

3. The test, criterion, or standard, by which true inspiration is to be discriminated from that which is false. *Hereby* (by what follows) *ye know the Spirit of God*—i.e., the teaching which originates from Him ; a metonymy of the agent for the effect produced by Him : the same as *the Spirit of truth*, which Christ promised to His apostles in a peculiar manner. Jno. 16 : 12-15.

The positive didactic test : *Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ hath come in flesh* (lit. *having come*, denoting the permanency of His incarnation) *is of God*. Every one professing to be inspired who acknowledges the Son of God Jesus Christ as truly manifested in our nature (and of course for the purposes set forth by prophets and apostles), is a teacher who has received his doctrine from God. (1 Cor. 12 : 3.)

Who Jesus Christ is, or the nature of His person and work, is clearly and copiously declared in the Sacred Word. (Notes on 2 : 22, 23.) And also by John, especially in the beginning of his gospel, and of this epistle. And here, in the preceding and subsequent context, he leaves us in no perplexity as to his meaning : This is his commandment, that ye believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ. 3 : 23. God hath sent His Son, the only begotten, into the world, that we might live through Him. He sent His Son, a propitiation for our sins. 4 : 9, 10. Cf. 4 : 14, 15 ; 5 : 5. This one is the true God and eternal life, 5 : 20. The Eternal Living One that was with the Father was manifested to us, 1 : 2 ; He hath come in flesh.

The negative didactic test : *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ hath come* (lit. *having come*) *in flesh is not of God*. Every one who denies the truth of the incarnation of the Eternal Son as revealed in Scripture does not derive his doctrine from God. *And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh, and now already is it in the world*. Such a teacher is under the influ-

ence of some spirit, but that is the spirit which is to control the predicted Antichrist, the spirit that is even now at work in those worldly men who are his forerunners—that is, the false prophets. Every one who denies the incarnation of the Eternal Word receives his Christology from the father of lies ; the inspiration he has is from the great deceiver.

4. The reason of the disciples' victory over the false prophets. *Ye are of God* (by regeneration, 2 : 29), *little children, and have overcome them*, ye have hitherto successfully resisted the assaults of the false prophets ; *because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world* ; infinitely more powerful is the Spirit of God that worketh in you than the spirit of error that worketh in the unrenewed, or worldly men, such as the false prophets are. Cf. Eph. 3 : 20, with 2 : 2. God hath given and still gives the victory to you as His children. By the Spirit which He gave you at your regeneration, ye conquer, 3 : 24 ; 2 : 20-27, or throw away the lies of Satan, as they drop from the lips or pens of his prophets.

5. The false prophets contrasted with the apostles as to their moral character and teachings : the ethical test. The character of those who receive apostolic teaching, and of those who reject it. Conclusion of the topic.

They are of the world, their origin as men and as teachers is from the unrenewed, the world that lieth in the wicked one, 5 : 19 ; they are children of the devil, especially as teachers, or false prophets. *Therefore they speak of the world* : the Greek does not mean about the world, but what originates from it ; that which is characteristic of unrenewed men, and suited to their depraved taste. *And hence the world heareth them*, or listens to their instructions with pleasure.

The false prophets, who deny the reality of the incarnation of the Son of God, proceed from the great multitude of those that are unregenerate ; therefore in their teaching they throw out what naturally springs up in the hearts of the men of the world. And unconverted men take delight in unconverted preachers ; preachers who put Christ in the

background, who preach every thing else but Him, and who are sagacious only in catering for the taste of men who are like themselves. They boast indeed of their moral and philosophical discourses ; but it is a morality and philosophy that is false and deceitful, because based on human conjectures and opinions, not on Christ, Col. 2 : 8, etc. ; not originating from love to the Redeemer. 1 Cor. 16 : 22. Their character, with that of their disciples, is here portrayed with three strokes of the Apostle's pencil : Worldly are they as men, worldly as teachers, and worldly are their hearers. (Notes on 2 : 15-17.)

We, as men and as apostles, *are of God*, as regenerated and as teachers we are from Him ; the allusion being chiefly to the gift of prophecy, or inspiration : *we* = we apostles, as in 4 : 14 ; 1 : 1-3. We are of God as apostles, and speak what He has revealed to us by the Spirit of truth. *He that knoweth God heareth us* ; he who is truly renewed, or acquainted with God as his Father and friend in Christ, listens to our instructions with pleasure. (Notes on 2 : 3-6.) *He that is not of God*, not His child by regeneration, 2 : 29, *heareth not us* ; he refuses to believe and obey our inspired teachings as apostles. He belongs to the ungodly world, and hears the false prophets, ver. 5.

From this, by the reception or rejection of Apostolic teaching, *we know* (the Apostle here speaking in the name of his brethren) *the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of Error—i.e.*, whose instructions are derived from the Spirit of truth, and whose from Satan the spirit of error.

Since the departure of the apostles and prophets of the Christian Church, we have the Canon of Scripture completed, which is the only infallible rule of faith and duty. Hereby our teachers must be tested. If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them. Isa. 8 : 19, 20. And if we hear not Moses, the prophets and apostles, what will we say at the appearing of Jesus Christ ? 2 : 28 ; Jno. 8 : 24 ; 5 : 46.

So perspicuous is Holy Scripture in all its parts, historic,

didactic, devotional, preceptive, and predictive, that the great leading truths need not be misunderstood. We are in want of no vain and deceitful philosophy, no contradictory statements of science falsely so-called, as a substitute for God's Word, and no human traditions as a supplement to it. Ps. 19 : 7, etc. ; 2 Tim. 3 : 14-17 ; Rev. 22 : 18, 19, 20.

1. *Have gone out into the world* : either publicly appeared ; or gone forth from the churches and entered into the society of worldly men. We prefer the former ; for that is the obvious signification of "to go forth into the world." In 2 : 19, the adjunct settles the meaning: *From us* they went forth. 2. A B C L cop sah Oec ye know, S we know, K syr vg Did Thph is known : A C S having come (perf. part.), B hath come (perf. infin.). (Cf. *hēkei*, 5 : 20.) *Ginoskete* is not the imperative, but the indicative, for the verb occurs in that mood everywhere else in this epistle where a test is referred to. 2 : 3, 5, 18 ; 3 : 19, 24 ; 4 : 6, 13 ; 5 : 2. 3. And every spirit that confesseth not Jesus Christ (as) having come in flesh is not of God. This, the c. t., is supported by Polycarp, the oldest witness, about A.D. 100. Ep. § 7. "For *whoever confesseth not that Jesus Christ hath come* (perf. inf.) *in flesh is an Antichrist.*" (An allusion also to 2 : 18, 22.) Ignatius also (or whoever is the author of the shorter recension of the epistles ascribed to him), Ad Smyr., seems to allude to the c. t. "For what does any one profit me, if he commends me, but blasphemes my Lord, *not confessing Him as a flesh-bearer?*" S thus : *and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus the Lord (kurion) as having come in flesh is not of God.* The c. t. is also supported by syr, the most ancient version of the N. T., we hold it therefore to be unquestionably genuine. A B and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God. And this is now generally adopted by critical editors of the N. T. But what the c. t. has must in this reading be mentally supplied ; and such repetitions are in perfect keeping with the style of John. Socrates, E. H. 7, 32, speaks of ancient manuscripts that read as follows : Every spirit that separates (*luei* = loosens, dissolves or separates) Jesus is not from God : *apo*, not *ek*. And so Irenæus, 3, 16, 8, Origen, and vg. But this reading certainly savors of dogmatical exegesis, and probably originated from an unwise zeal against Gnosticism. It is a post-apostolic technical term ; first used by those who opposed the Gnostics, and afterwards by the opponents of Nestorianism. So the best critics judge.

6. B C K L S syr *ek touto*, A vg cop sah *en touto*.

§ 6. The doing of righteousness is an indisputable proof that we have been begotten of God, 2 : 29, or that we have

been regenerated by the Spirit which he gave us, 3 : 24. But they who do righteousness keep the commandments of God, and especially those which require faith in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love to one another as He commanded, 3 : 23. In this section, 4 : 7-21, we have an elucidation of the latter, especially in its relation to the love of God, and of the former as shown by a confession of Jesus as the Son of God.

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another : for love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. ⁸ He that loveth not, knoweth not God ; for God is love. ⁹ In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. ¹⁰ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. ¹² No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³ Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

¹⁴ And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

¹⁷ Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment : because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love ; but perfect love casteth out fear : because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

¹⁹ We love him, because he first loved us. ²⁰ If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar : for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ? ²¹ And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

I. *Beloved, let us love one another ;* which affectionate exhortation is most powerfully enforced. I. *Because love*

is of God ; from Him as its primal source, or efficient cause. It is a stream issuing from the absolute fountain of all moral excellence ; and hence every exercise and manifestation of Christian love must be right. All holy love is from God, the great author and promoter of it, whether it is love to Himself, to Christ, to the brethren, or to men in their un-renewed state, 1 Cor. 13 ; Mat. 5 : 43-48 ; but John refers especially to Christian love : Let us love one another ; for such love is holy, or it comes from God as its author or producer.

2. *And every one that loveth hath been begotten of God* such a lover is a child of God by regeneration, *and knoweth God*, hath a true knowledge of Him as his Father and friend in Christ, the knowledge being proved by his love to the brethren. Cf. notes on 2 : 3-6 ; 3 : 14. *He that loveth not hath never known God, because God is love.* He that loveth not, as before said, must hate, and he that hateth knoweth the devil, but he is wholly ignorant of God. And this remains so, whatever his learning as a theologian may be. Knowledge without love is from Satan ; love with knowledge is from God. God is love, and He begets children in His own likeness, not in that of Satan.

God is love : in this favorite expression of the beloved disciple, *love* is a metonymy of the abstract for the concrete, and the sense is, God is infinitely benevolent and beneficent, or, He ever and perfectly loveth. Some strangely contend that *love* here expresses the essence of God ; but if so, God will have as many essences as He has attributes. "*God is a spirit* : " *that* expresses his essence. Love exists in God in the highest possible degree, or in absolute immutable perfection. It is not the essence or substance of God ; but it is in Him, is ever exercised by Him, flows into our hearts from Him, and is proved to us in a way that admits of no intelligent doubt. The properties or qualities of a person are not his spiritual substance, but the peculiar manifestations or activities that originate from such a sub-

stance. And they who attempt to go farther strike the head against a wall of adamant.

3. Our obligation to love the brethren arises from the fact that they are the special objects of God's love in Christ, vs. 9-11.

To give the greatest possible point and power to this motive that is within the reach of human language, the reality and greatness of God's love is first illustrated, and then the practical inference follows. *In this* (or, *herein*, as in ver. 10) *was manifested the love of God toward us, because He hath sent His Son, the only begotten, into the world, in order that we might live through Him.* (Or, *in this fact the love of God*, etc.—namely, *that he hath sent*, etc.) *Toward us*, lit. in us. The love of God was made manifest, brought to light, or clearly demonstrated; that love centring in us as its objects, as in ver. 16. Jno. 13 : 35, Gr. ; cf. 9 : 3. The perfect tense, *hath sent*, indicates that the love which led to the mission of His Son still continues. *The only begotten* describes the Son as a partaker of the essence or nature of the Father. *That we might live through Him*, or be justified and sanctified by Him as our priest and advocate; for there can be no life for a sinner except the curse be removed, and the Spirit of Christ be at work in his heart.

The Apostle enlarges on the great truth that God is love : *Herein is love*, the highest love and perfectly proven (as in 3 : 16), *not that we loved God*, which we did not, so that He cannot be a debtor to us, Rom. 11 : 35, *but that He Himself loved us*, a love wholly undeserved on our part, *and sent* (the aorist referring to a fact of the past once for all accomplished) *His Son a propitiation for our sins.* (Cf. Heb. 9 : 28 ; and notes on 1 Jno. 2 : 2.)

The pre-eminence of the love consists and appears in the fact that it is *the love of God*, the infinitely blessed, self-sufficient, and independent One; the love of the Holy God *to us* sinful men; in the fact that *He Himself out of pure*

grace and mercy sent His Son, the only begotten, with His own consent (3 : 16), to give us a holy spiritual life, and deliver us from all the penal consequences of our sins ; in the fact that God provided no Redeemer for angels that sinned—the philanthropy of God our Saviour in Christ. Cf. Heb. 2 : 16 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 4 ; Tit. 3 : 3-7.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. If this motive does not sweetly constrain us to Christian love, what can or will? If we do not increase in this love by considering that for them Christ died, that they are the special objects of God's love ; then we may be intelligent and learned in other matters, and be commended by those like ourselves, but we are not children of God by regeneration. The renewed must and do love those whom God loves. And they *ought* to do so ; for they are bound to be imitators of God as beloved children, and to walk as Christ did, in love. 3 : 16 ; 2 : 6 ; Eph. 5 : 1, 2, with 4 : 31, 32.

The Apostle speaks of the love of God to us in the mission of His Son as the highest possible love. If so, as it unquestionably is, then they are Irrationalists and practical infidels who treat it with indifference or contempt.

If so, then Jesus Christ is not a mere man. For how can a mere man be the only begotten Son of God? Could he be sent into the world, if he had no existence until born of the Virgin Mary? Did a mere man exist from eternity with God, and as God? Jno. 1 : 1, 2 ; 1 Jno. 1 : 1, 2.

If Christ is, as the Arians say, the first and holiest of created spirits, sent in a human or quasi-human body for our redemption ; then this is not the highest possible love, nor a proof of love to us at all. For this is to make an imaginary being, one who is neither God, nor man, nor angel, but a sort of angel-half-man, and to put that in the place of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. Is the sending of a chimera a demonstration of God's love?

If Christ had no rational human soul, but the Eternal Word supplied its place, as the Apollinarians say, and if

such a being, clothed with a human body, was sent by the Father into the world for our redemption, then he was not the Christ, the God-man. But to deny that the Eternal Son truly assumed complete human nature, is anti-Christian teaching. (Notes on 2 : 22, 23 ; 4 : 2, 3 ; 1 : 1, 2.) It will not do to say, We honor the Redeemer as the Eternal Word : for the Redeemer is not the Eternal Word alone. Neither is He the Eternal Word clothed merely with a human body, and a sensitive or animal soul ; but He is the Eternal Word clothed with our complete nature, a true body and a rational soul. He that confesseth not this is an Antichrist by way of eminence ; making the whole Bible an enigma and a fable.

4. If we love one another, God abides in us and we in Him, by the Spirit He hath given us : or, brotherly love is a proof of our moral union, or friendship, with God.

No one at any time hath beheld God. Cf. Jno. 1 : 18. God as He is in Himself is invisible to all created intelligences. *If we love one another*, if we as children of God love one another, then *God abideth*, etc. The Father of the household is invisible. No one hath ever beheld Him. But we have beheld the incarnate Son, although at present unseen, ver. 14. And if we love one another, we love the only members of God's family that are visible on earth, we love those whom God peculiarly loves. So the thoughts are connected in the Apostle's mind.

If we love one another, then two things follow : *God abideth in us*. He makes our hearts His house or temple ; He moves and operates constantly in our purified souls, making them purer and purer. *And so His love is perfected in us* ; and, by abiding in us, His love is perfectly proved *in us—i.e., to us*, as the objects of that love ; as in vs. 9, 16. Or, His love is shown to perfection in us, the persons loved. (Notes on Jas. 2 : 22.) Others translate and explain : *And the love of Him is perfected in us*. By love to the brethren our love to God reaches the consummation or end designed ; attains its end or *telos* in this particular. We prefer the

former explanation, for when God abides in us, He gives to those in whom He abides a most wonderful and indisputable proof of His love to them personally. Besides the proof of God's love to us in sending the Redeemer, there is the fact of God's abiding in our souls, and so assuring us of His love to us as individual believers. The objective demonstration of God's love to us, and the subjective proof of it by the testimony of the Spirit, are both as demonstrations perfect. Cf. Rom. 5 : 5, 6 ; 8 : 16.

For if the question arises, How can we know that God abideth in us, or that our souls are the seat of His purifying energy and gracious power ; the Apostle answers thus : *Hereby we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He hath given* (not only at our regeneration, 3 : 24, but still continues to give) *us of His Spirit.* (Notes on 3 : 24.) If we love one another, God abideth in us, and so His love to us is perfectly shown, because He constantly gives us of the influences of the Spirit, the Spirit of grace, the great author of love to the brethren, and to God. If then we find this love in us, we know, not conjecture or suppose, that we are Friends of God.

II. Love to God is inseparably connected with a confession of Jesus, and that in accordance with the testimony of His apostles.

We also have beheld, and do testify that the Father hath sent the Son, a Saviour of the world. This is the substance of the apostles' testimony concerning the philanthropy of God. (a) We apostles have steadfastly looked upon the Son of God manifested in the flesh. 1 : 1-4 ; 3 : 8 ; 5 : 20 ; Jno. 1 : 14, 18. (b) We testify that the Father has sent Him as the Saviour of mankind, or the great majority of the race. (Notes on 2 : 2.)

Such unspeakable love should be felt and acknowledged, and when this occurs, the most blessed result follows : *Whoever* (any and every one of the world, or of mankind, just mentioned) *shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God.* Such a confessor and God are

friends (as before and often explained), God abiding in him by the Spirit, and he in God by faith and love. By that confession he goes out from the ungodly multitude, and becomes a child and friend of God.

We also (as children of God) *have known and believed the love which God hath to us* : lit. *in us*, centring in us as its objects. We have known and believed the love which God has manifested to us in the sending of His Son, and the gift of His Spirit. We have not only beheld and given our testimony concerning the Son as sent by the Father, and so acted as apostles, but we have also as children of God known and believed in the reality and greatness of His love to us. *God is love* : and *he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God in him* : mutual love is the basis of their holy friendship.

It thus appears that the Confession spoken of is an unfeigned and public acknowledgment of Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of men. (1.) It is a confession *that Jesus is the Son of God—i.e.*, of the same nature with the Father who sent Him. So Rom. 10 : 9, “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord,” etc.—*i.e.*, Adonai, or Jehovah. Not to acknowledge this from the heart, is to pour contempt on the highest possible manifestation of love. (2.) *That He is the only Saviour of men* : not only able and willing to save the lost and the ungodly, the guilty and the helpless, but the only one who has the right to save, and who was sent by the Father to this rebel province for that express purpose ; and that by laying down His life for us. (3 : 16 ; 5 : 5, 6.) (3.) It is preceded by a *knowledge* of what God has revealed concerning Jesus His Son, and attended with *faith* or a personal trust in Him for salvation : or, a discernment and belief of God’s love to us, with a personal application to Christ to redeem and save us, ver. 16. (4.) Also, with love to the Sender and the Sent ; not a fitful sentiment, but an abiding in love to God and Christ. (5.) This confession, if genuine, will be adhered to, even when

the hatred of the world breaks out in murderous persecutions. 3 : 13, 16 ; Mat. 10 : 28, and vs. 34-42.

Such a confession of Jesus cannot be made without the illuminating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, and hence it is an unquestionable proof of love to and friendship with God, ver. 16. (Cf. 1 Cor. 12 : 3.)

III. The consummation of love among Christians, with its blessed consequences, present and future.

Lit. *In this hath love been perfected with us, in order that we may have confidence* (boldness, *parresia*, a holy humble confidence, as in 2 : 28. Cf. 3 : 21 ; 5 : 14) *in the day of judgment ; because as That One is, we also are in this world.* The best interpreters differ greatly as to the meaning of the first clause, *In this hath love been perfected with, or among, us* : some explaining *love* of God's love to us, as Calvin ; others, of our love to God ; others, of brotherly love, as Lücke ; others, of holy love in general, as Braune.

In this refers to what precedes, as in 2 : 5 ; 3 : 10. *With us* must be connected with the verb, as in the above translation : and it is certain that *with us* is not the same as *our*.

1. As to the love intended : It is not God's love to us ; for the Apostle assumes that the love he speaks of may be imperfect and mingled with fear and punishment, or mental anguish, and that only when perfect or full grown does it expel such fear, ver. 18. But there is nothing corresponding to this in the Holy One ; in His love to us there can be no fear or torment. Calvin says that God's love to us is in all respects perfect, which is indeed true ; but how can there be fear and punishment in His love ? It is morally impossible.

The love intended is holy love in general, or such a love as exists among the renewed, wherever they live in this world. This includes love to God, to Christ, to the brethren, and to the unrenewed ; or all the forms of holy love. They who persevere in the cultivation of this love emphatically abide in God, and God in them, ver. 16 ; they will

unquestionably have boldness in the day of judgment, because of their likeness to Christ, the King and Judge ; and, while sojourning on earth, they are delivered from all dread of future condemnation. (Notes on 4 : 7.)

By this mode of explanation tautology is avoided, and light thrown on the order of the topics occurring in this section : Brotherly love in its relation to, or as it is influenced by, God's love manifested to us in the sending of His Son, and in the gift of His Spirit. 7-13. Love to God in its relation to the confession of Jesus as the Son of God, and the Saviour of mankind. 14-16. The consummation of holy love in general, with its blessed consequences, present and future, 17-18. Love to God and love to the brethren are inseparable. 19-21.

2. In what the perfection of this love consists, and how it is obtained.

The perfection of all created intelligences is a relative perfection, an everlasting moving point, or to all eternity progressive. God alone is absolutely perfect. He *is* light and love ; but holy angels and men *walk* in light and love, and so their blessedness is forever promoted.

As to the saints, while dwelling in the mortal body, it is written that Noah was a righteous man and perfect—*i.e.*, whole-souled in his obedience to Jehovah ; and that Abraham's faith was made perfect, or perfectly proved and attained its highest eminence, when he laid Isaac his son upon the altar. And so of holy love : it is whole-souled or sincere, supreme and controlling, and ever grows in purity and power. It is not a sinless conformity to the first and greatest precept of the moral law, nor to the second ; but it is a love that is shed abroad in our hearts, filling every nook and crevice of the soul, by the Holy Spirit given unto us. Love to God in Christ is the master passion of the renewed, subduing all unholy love, and leading to brotherly love and philanthropy by a sweet and blessed necessity. And when this love reaches the highest degree attainable in this life, it is made perfect.

Love hath been perfected *with us* ; there is nothing like it to be discovered among the great multitude of the unregenerate. They may and often have and exhibit natural affection, and practical sympathy to those like themselves ; but no holy love, no love to God and to Christ, and to those who are like Christ. 3 : 13, 16 ; Jno. 15 : 18, 19. Their love is instinctive, contracted in its objects, and originates not from a supreme regard to the authority of God.

But how does holy love go on to its consummation ? *In this* (or *hereby*) hath love been perfected with us—*i.e.*, by knowing and believing the love which God has to us as shown in the mission of His Son, and in the gift of the Spirit, vs. 13, 16. This knowledge and faith are the oil by which the Spirit of grace keeps alive the fire of love in our hearts, causing it to burn with a steadier and purer flame ; and so it goes on to completion.

3. The future blessed consequence or reward of this love as purposed by God, and the equity of that reward : Love is perfected among us, *in order that we may have* (or, *so that we can have*) *boldness in the day of judgment* ; boldness in the day when terror and despair will smite the haters of God, and of Christ, and of the holy. (Notes on 2 : 28 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 5 ; Jas. 2 : 5.) An humble boldness, a joyful assurance, as we stand before our Saviour and Lord, while He makes manifest the counsels of our hearts, and shows the love that's there. 1 Cor. 4 : 5 ; Jno. 5 : 24.

The equity of the reward : *because as That One is, we also are in this world.* Or thus : *because as He is, so are we in this world.* (*Ekeinos* = that one, that wonderful being described, 1 : 1-4.) Because we are like Christ, the incarnate Son of God ; like Him in righteousness and love. As He is in heaven, so are we on earth. The same mind or disposition is in Him there, and in us here. We are not faultless as yet, but ever approximating in likeness to Him. It is perfectly right, then, that they who imitate Christ by walking in light and love should have boldness in the day of

judgment. How can Christ condemn those who are like Himself ?

4. The present blessed consequence of holy love : It is attended by a settled peace of conscience, or excludes from the soul all dread of future condemnation.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear ; because fear hath punishment : but he that feareth hath not been perfected in love. There is no fear or terror in the love of which I am speaking, but this holy love when full grown throws terror out of the soul (perfect or full-grown love being spoken of by personification as ejecting an intruder), because terror, or a dread of the Divine indignation, has punishment, or is inseparably connected with mental anguish. But he that so feareth has but imperfect love. And this is especially true of love to God and Christ.

Slavish fear of God as an enemy and avenger, if it be habitual and supreme in the soul, is inconsistent with love to Him as our Redeemer in Christ. Cf. Rom. 8 : 14, 15. And that disciple who trembles and shudders, or fears that he may be finally condemned at the appearing of Christ, is as yet imperfect in his love, even if it is genuine ; as was the case with the apostles themselves, in the earlier stages of their spiritual life. Mat. 10 : 28.

Love to God casts out terror, but not reverence, not a filial fear of displeasing Him by our sins. 1 Pet. 1 : 17-21. But if we are like Christ in righteousness and love, if we purify ourselves as He is pure, 3 : 3, why should we not expect to have boldness in the day of judgment ?

But if any, after a profession of faith in Christ, walk in the darkness and live in hatred, to them as adversaries of God there must be a fearful looking for of judgment ; Heb. 10 : 26, 27, but not to those who walk in the light and live in holy love.

IV. Love to God and love to the brethren are inseparable graces of the regenerated : *We love Him, because He Himself first loved us.* Our love to God arises from His previ-

ous love to us ; He *loved us* from eternity, and demonstrated it as before stated, vs. 9-13. If His love had not been so manifested, dread of God must ever have filled our hearts. Our love to God, then, according to Christ's apostle, arises from a knowledge and belief of God's love to us (so it springs up in the heart), or one of its chief characteristics is gratitude for the benefits of redemption. And this gratitude is one of the holiest forms of love, and leads the soul to reflect on and delight in the infinite moral excellence of God.

If any one say, "I love God," and hateth his brother, he is a liar (or a hypocrite), *for he that loveth not*, etc. If he love not the children of God with whom he is acquainted, the visible and special objects of God's love, how can he love the invisible God, their Father in Christ ?

And this commandment have we from Him (from God through Christ, 3 : 23, 24), *that he who loveth God love also his brother*. How can he love God who despises His authority, trampling under foot the second great commandment of His law ?

8. *ouk egno* = hath never known ; not once in the past, for this is the force of the aorist. Cf. 1 Pet. 2 : 22.

9. The love of God *was manifested*, or *brought to light*, by sending His Son ; and the bright beams of that love met and centred *in us*, the persons loved. The permanency or immutability of the love then manifested is intimated by the perfect tense, "hath sent." (Cf. Rom. 8 : 31-39.)

13. *Hoti ek tou pneumatos autou* (auten) *dedoken hemin* : because from His Spirit he hath given (it—*i.e.*, brotherly love) to us. So *ek* is the *ek* of efficiency, and the verb as usual (in 3 : 24, *hou* is for *hon* by a common attraction) takes the acc. with the dat. But by taking *ek* paritively, nothing need be supplied ; which is therefore generally preferred.

17. The c. t. is unquestionably genuine, supported by B syr vg etc. *With us* = among us, in our company or society ; *meta* with gen., like our mid, amid, in the midst of, and the Dutch met. Cf. 2 : 19 ; 2 Jno. 2.

S is peculiar in having with us in us, the two last words, probably, an interpolation from ver. 16. Also, in having *echōmen* (instead of *echōmen*), which is a palpable mistake (and at Rom. 5 : 1, B S read *echōmen* ; another mistake equally palpable) : S also has shall be. In this verse,

then, we have one interpolation and two transcribers' mistakes in the oldest known manuscript. vg *charitas Dei*. 18. *Kolasís*, punishment, as at Mat. 25 : 46. Cognate verb, 2 Pet. 2 : 9 ; Acts. 4 : 21.

19. A vg we therefore, A B we love, S syr cop vg we love God, K L Thph Oec we love Him.

20. B S sah He cannot love ; syr vg Cyprian, Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, how can He love.

21. B S syr from Him, A vg from God.

CHAPTER V.

§ 7. Faith in Jesus as the Christ, love to God and to the brethren, joyful obedience to the divine precepts, and victory over the world, are all forms or manifestations of righteousness and characteristic of the genuine children of God. 1-5.

¹ Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God : and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments : and his commandments are not grievous. ⁴ For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. ⁵ Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ?

In this paragraph the Apostle shows *the relation of faith in Christ* to that holy love, obedience, and victory over the world, which are characteristic of those who are children of God and have communion with Him, and with His Son Jesus Christ : giving in this manner a brief recapitulation of the main topics handled in the preceding portions of the epistle.

1. Faith in Jesus as the Christ is the effect of regeneration ; producing love to the renewer and to the renewed : *Every one who believeth that Jesus is the Christ* (notes on 2 : 22, 23 ; 4 : 2, 3) *hath been begotten of God ; and every one that loveth Him who begat loveth also Him that hath been begotten of Him* : every one that loveth God who has regenerated him loveth also the other children of the family with

whom he is acquainted. Col. 1 : 4. The Apostle takes it for granted that this faith works by love to God and to His children. Gal. 5 : 6. It is the hand of the soul which touches all the other graces of the Spirit, and keeps them in constant activity ; the proximate internal propeller of love, hope, and every other virtue existing in those who have been begotten of God. It is also the eye of the soul which discerns the truth of God's testimony concerning His Son, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth ; sees His perfect right to save, His holy beauty and suitability as a Saviour from sin, so that the renewed, clinging to Him, walk in light and love.

2. The tests of love to God's children are love to God, and the voluntary joyous keeping of His commandments. Christ's apostle often speaks of love to the brethren as a test and proof of love to God ; but here of love to God as a test and proof of brotherly love. But there is no inconsistency, for love to God as reconciled to us in Christ is the ground of brotherly love, or that from which the latter originates. 4 : 20 ; 4 : 9-11 ; 3 : 16-17. Both are valid tests, since the effect cannot exist without its producing cause.

Still there may be persons in such happy circumstances in this life that they may be deceived in saying, We love the brethren. Christians, for example, may be loved not as the children of God, but as kind-hearted companions and benefactors ; as those allied to us by the ties of blood or affinity ; as members of that visible branch of God's church in which our lot is cast, and with whom in many external acts we are co-workers. In such circumstances, or with so many and various influences at work tending to draw out natural affection, ordinary gratitude and denominational attachment, how can we know that we love those Christians with whom we are associated *as children of God* ? The Apostle answers : *when we love God and keep His commandments*. If we love God supremely, we must be conscious of it, as of any other love ; that is the mental test of love to Him ; and the practical one is an habitual doing of His will : supreme love

moving in a persevering uniform obedience. *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments* : this is the manifestation of love to Him, a perpetual aim and endeavor to keep His commandments, to please Him well in all things. (*Love* by metonymy ; the affection for its effect or manifestation. The aim and endeavor is indicated by *hina* = that, in order that.) *And* (in the execution of this intention) *His commandments are not burdensome*. It is not a drudgery, not a task or a burden, for the children of God to obey their Father in Christ, but a pleasure and a delight. And as a knowledge and belief of God's love to them in Christ increase, so does their love to God and Christ ; and thus it is that they are not burdened in the path of obedience, but walk with a light step and a glad heart. And this loving obedience, arising from faith, is precisely the armor needed to overcome the hatred and errors of the ungodly ; it is not too heavy and unwieldly, but adapted to disarm the malicious ; as the Apostle proceeds to show.

3. All the regenerate conquer the world by faith. *Because all that hath been begotten of God overcometh the world* : His commandments are not burdensome, because all the renewed, though attacked by the world and in daily conflict, conquer. (The neuter refers to the totality of the regenerate, the genus or class of men considered as a whole, and perhaps to their dignity. Cf. 3 : 1, with 2 : 29 ; Jno. 1 : 12, 13.) By *the world* is meant the men of the world, 2 : 15, who hate the righteous, 3 : 13, the children of the devil who persist in sinning, 3 : 8, 10, and who are in passive subjection to the wicked one, 5 : 19, and especially the false prophets, 4 : 4, 5.

The victory over the world chiefly consists in overcoming evil with good, and in vanquishing error with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. (See notes on 2 : 20-27 ; 4 : 1-4 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 8-16.) The hand which lays hold of and uses this sword is *faith*. The object of the faith is described in the animated question that follows : *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth*

that Jesus is the Son of God? Who becomes superior to all the blandishments of the unholy, all the fury of the powerful, and all the guile of the prophets of Satan, if not he who believes that the Redeemer is the God-man? Is not He who walks amidst all opposition, in holiness, truth, and love, a conqueror of the world? Are not they who do not and will not believe that Jesus is the Son of God mere men of the world, and overcome by it? 4 : 5.

The last clause of ver. 4. Lit. And this is the victory that *overcame* the world, our faith. Faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, enabled us at our regeneration to resist the temptations, disregard the maxims, avoid the sinful pleasures, and bear with meekness the hatred of the world. So the victory first occurred : the present tense in the first clause indicates that it still continues. When renewed, our faith *overcame* the world, and in so doing the prince of this world ; and this faith *overcometh*, or is ever victorious. (In the word *victory* there seems to be a metonymy of the effect for the cause ; or rather a metonymy and personification combined : This, our faith, is the conqueror that overcame the world.)

2. A K L S keep, B vg syr cop do. 4. *That overcame* : The aorist participle is not used for the perfect ; since these participles are distinguished from one another in the first verse. And it is forced to suppose that the participle denotes what is customary, for that is here expressed by the present tense. 5. *The Son of God*. Cf. Mat. 16 : 13-17 ; Heb. 1 : 2, 3 ; Phil. 2 : 5, 8 ; Jno. 5 : 18 ; 19 : 7. We recommend our readers to consult that excellent work entitled, *The Supreme Godhead of Christ, the Corner Stone of Christianity*. By W. R. Gordon.

⁶ This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. ⁷ For there are three that bare record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one. ⁸ And there are three that bear witness in earth], the Spirit, and the water, and the blood : and these three agree in one. ⁹ If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater : for this is the witness of God which

he hath testified of his Son. ¹⁰ He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself : he that believeth not God hath made him a liar ; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. ¹¹ And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² He that hath the Son hath life ; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

C. The Third Main Division of the Epistle : *The Divine Testimony concerning Jesus as the Christ, who came by water and blood. The consequences of receiving or rejecting that testimony.*

I. The testimony of God concerning His Son, our Redeemer. 1. As to the Great Fact attested : *This* (the one just mentioned, ver. 5) *is He who came by water and blood*, I mean *Jesus Christ* ; *not with the water only, but with the water and the blood*. The fact attested is not only that Jesus, the Son of God is Messiah or the Christ, but that as such He came by water and blood. He appeared at His first advent as our priest and sacrifice from His baptism until His crucifixion. God *sent* His Son into the world for the purposes stated in 4 : 9, 10, 16, and the Son *came*, with His own consent, 3 : 16, clothing Himself with our nature, in order that those great ends might be attained. And He came *by water and blood* (or, through water and blood)—*i.e.*, by these as the attendant circumstances of His advent. Cf. Heb. 9 : 12. *Not with the water only* (*en* as in Heb. 9 : 25), *but with the water and the blood*. He came as Messiah the priest, and finished His work as such on earth : He was not only consecrated as the priest at His baptism, but gave His life for us on the cross. When He came as Messiah the priest, He did not leave His work unfinished ; did not shrink or recede because of difficulties, but became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Jesus Messiah came, *not in connection with the water only, but in connection with the water and the blood* : there was no break, interruption, or imperfection, in the discharge of this part of His Messianic office, between His baptism and His crucifixion.

Blood is used by synecdoche for the sacrifice of Himself, Heb. 9 : 26, and *water* by metonymy for His baptism ; that being the external sign of His consecration as the Great High Priest of our profession.

The Eternal Son having come in flesh as the priest, as the propitiation for our sins, as the righteous for the unrighteous to bring us near to God, was very properly baptized. When Jesus the Christ required His herald and forerunner to baptize Him, He acknowledged thereby that we were sinners, that He took our place or was our legally appointed substitute ; and that as such it became Him to fulfil all that the law of God demanded. Mat. 3 : 15, with 5 : 17 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21. (Other interpretations are noticed below.)

2. The Divine Testimony concerning Jesus the Christ, who came by water and blood. (The words above enclosed in brackets are, in our judgment, no part of the genuine text. See notes below.) *And it is the Spirit that testifieth*, He is the principal witness, *because the Spirit is truth—i.e.*, infinitely truthful, who cannot be deceived or deceive. And this perfectly credible witness testifieth herein, not only by the mighty works which Jesus did, Mat. 12 : 28, and by what occurred at His baptism, and on the day of Pentecost, but also by the prophets and apostles, in whom the Spirit of Truth was and by whom He spake. 4 : 1-6 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 21 ; Heb. 10 : 14-18.

The Spirit by the pen of Moses testifies concerning the work of Messiah the priest in the ceremonial law, in the ordinances relating to the sin offerings, and particularly in what occurred on the great day of atonement ; as is evident from the book of Leviticus, when compared with the Epistle to the Hebrews. By the prophets the Spirit testifies that the Messiah to come would be the God-man, or the incarnate Son of God. (Notes on 2 : 22, 23.) And that the same Messiah would appear as priest and sacrifice to bear the sins of men. Ps. 22 ; Isa. 53.

The genuine text follows : *For there are three who testify, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and the three agree in one* ; or wholly concur in their testimony. Here John speaks of the water and the blood as testifying, but only by personification (Heb. 12 : 24) ; since he has just said : It is the Spirit that testifieth. Facts speak ; there is a meaning in them, and especially such facts as the baptism and vicarious death of Jesus Christ.

What, then, does the water testify, or the inspired narratives concerning the manner and circumstances of His baptism ? John, His forerunner and herald, had a divinely appointed sign, by which the true Messiah was to become infallibly known to him, the descent of the Spirit in a visible form or appearance : and he saw the Spirit like a dove descending and resting on our Lord. And John publicly declared that Jesus was the Son of God, the Lamb of God, who had come to take away the sin of the world. And this the Spirit, who is truth, testifies by the pen of apostles. Jno. 1 : 29-34 ; Mat. 3 : 13-17 ; cf. Mk. 1 : 9-11 ; Lk. 3 : 21, 22. And the Father Himself, with an audible voice declared, " This is My beloved Son," etc.

What does the blood testify, or the inspired narratives concerning the manner and circumstances of His death ? To say nothing of the earthquake and the supernatural darkness attending the crucifixion of Jesus, what did the rending of the veil of the temple signify ? It was an unmistakable sign given by Jehovah Himself that Messiah the priest had come, that the true propitiation for our sins was then offered, and that the way to the most holy place was opened by the blood of Jesus the Christ. Mat. 27 : 50, 51, with Heb. 9 : 8 ; 10 : 19-21 ; Rev. 5 : 6.

Moreover, we should recollect that Jesus, in the most solemn manner, before the Sanhedrim, the representatives of the church and nation, confessed that He was the Christ, and in so doing that He was the Son of God in such a sense

as to be equal with God. Mat. 26 : 63, 64 ; Mk. 14 : 61, 62 ; Lk. 22 : 66-71 ; Jno. 5 : 18 ; 19 : 7. That Jesus on this account was condemned by the Sanhedrim as guilty of blasphemy. Mat. 26 : 65, 66 ; Mk. 14 : 63, 64. That our Redeemer died in a way perfectly becoming the incarnate Son of God ; praying for his murderers, and with a meekness, patience, and love that have no parallel in the history of the universe : and this while giving His life a ransom for many. Mat. 20 : 28. That, notwithstanding His claim of being equal with God, and of being the substitute of sinners, God raised Him from the dead ; in this manner irrefragably demonstrating that Jesus, who came by water and blood, was indeed the Christ, the Son of God. Rom. 1 : 4 ; 4 : 25.

Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, also exercised the office of a Prophet when He was on earth, Acts 3 : 22, 23 ; 1 Jno. 1 : 5. And He is, by divine right and appointment, King of the Jews, as He confessed to Pilate, Mat. 27 : 11. Cf. Acts 2 : 30, and the Lord of the whole earth, as He confessed before the Sanhedrim, Mat. 26 : 63, 64. Cf. Dan. 7 : 13, 14 ; Ps. 2. But John here speaks of Jesus as Messiah the Priest.

II. The duty of men in the matter, and the consequences of receiving or rejecting this testimony of God concerning His Son, who came by water and blood.

1. The Apostle begins this topic by stating the duty of the evangelized in the matter : *If we receive the testimony of men*, as in fact we do and regulate our conduct by it in important matters, *the testimony of God is greater*, infinitely worthy of our credit and acceptance, since He cannot lie. And such a testimony is extant ; *for this is the testimony of God* (that contained in vs. 6-8) *which He hath testified concerning His Son*.

Faith is trust in a personal being : and our belief in the testimony of any one is more or less, or nothing at all, according to the knowledge we have of the character of the witness. And since God is light, love, and truth, His testi-

mony concerning Jesus as the Christ is perfectly unimpeachable ; and it is our duty to accept it without doubt or hesitation, and act as His testimony requires. 1 Jno. 3 : 23. It is indeed a faithful word and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief of sinners. 1 Tim. 1 : 15.

2. The character of men as exhibited in receiving the divine testimony, contrasted with that of those who reject it ; the former glorifying God as God, the latter dishonoring Him, by treating Him as a deceiver. *He that believeth in the Son of God*, he who credits the divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ, His Son, and personally trusts in Him as the alone Redeemer, vs. 6-9, *hath* (or, *holdeth*) *the testimony in himself*. He has it as a valuable possession ; or rather, he holds it, clings to it as perfectly true : *hath* = retains, as in Rom. 1 : 28 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 13. *In himself*--i.e., in the depths of his soul : as in Mat. 13 : 21. "He hath no root in himself." Jno. 6 : 53. "Except ye eat, etc., ye have no life in yourselves." He, then, who trusts in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who came by water and blood, has this testimony of God concerning His Son fixed in the depths of his soul, and holds or retains it there. He holds it as perfectly true, because God says so, and trusts in the divinely attested Redeemer, and in Him alone, for salvation.

" In my hand no price I bring ;
Simply to thy cross-I cling."

This explanation is confirmed by what follows : *He that believeth not God*, does not credit Him as a witness, *hath made him a liar* (1 : 10), *because he hath not believed in the testimony which God hath testified concerning His Son* : he acts as if God had testified falsely in that matter. Now, "to make God a liar," is the opposite of "To hold His testimony within one's self," or adhere to it as absolutely true.

To have or hold in ourselves the testimony of God concerning Christ, is the witness of the Spirit in this sense only—namely, that this faith in the Redeemer is the effect of

regeneration, wrought in the soul by God through the Spirit. 5 : 1 ; Jno. 3 : 8.

Believers honor God by laying hold of, and holding on or adhering to, the testimony of God concerning His Son. By word and deed they say : We hold it as true in the depths of the soul that God did send His only begotten Son into the world as the propitiation for our sins, and that the Son came as such, in order that we might live through Him.

It cheers us, while walking in the light as God is in the light, to know that the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. So God testifies, and so we believe. Cf. Rom. 4 : 20-25.

Unbelievers dishonor God by rejecting His testimony concerning His Son. By word and deed they say : We cannot and will not believe on any testimony, human or divine, or both combined, that the Christ is very God as well as man ; and it is irrational to suppose that the innocent should suffer for the guilty. (See notes on 1 Pet. 2 : 24.) So many, coolly and persistingly, and some disdainfully, reject the testimony of God Himself to the only Redeemer of men : and so the thoughts of many hearts are revealed. Lk. 2 : 34, 35. But who can measure the enormous insolence of that sin which says to the God of Truth Himself, Thou liest ? Who is Jehovah that I should believe in and obey Christ, because He so commands ? "Be not deceived : God is not mocked."

3. The substance of the testimony repeated : *And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.* Gr. *edoken*.

God gave us eternal life, or legally secured to all believers that inestimable gift, when He sent His Son in our nature to be the expiatory sacrifice for our sins ; when He accepted the work of the Redeemer in our stead, and received Him, after His resurrection, as our Advocate or

priestly intercessor ; and all that we might live through Him.

And this life is in His Son : in Him as the only inexhaustible source, fountain, or procuring cause. In Him also as its perpetual conserver. It is *eternal life* ; not only freedom from final and everlasting punishment, but a holy, everlasting, and blissful existence. “I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall pluck them out of my hand.” Jno. 10 : 28. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.” (Jno. 6 : 53, 54. These words are explained in the Introduction to the Epistle of James : Tropical Language, under the head Hypocatastasis, or Substitution.) Deliverance from the curse of the law and sanctification of the Spirit are both given to believers, because of Christ’s obedience unto death. Gal. 3 : 13, 14. Hence He is our life, or we have eternal life in Him. It flows to us from Him, or we receive it from His fulness ; the life of grace in present possession, and that of glory in assured expectation : *vita gratiæ in re, et vita gloriæ in spe.* (Tirinus.)

“The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom. 6 : 23. It is not a swiftly-passing superficial illumination, not a temporary or fitful holiness, not the happiness of a few years, but everlasting life. And this life is in the Messiah Jesus our Lord. He is the great author and conserver of it, and Him all believers delight to obey.

If the gift of God be eternal life in Christ, men can never earn or buy it by any supposed merits, or painful penances endured in obedience to human authority, or in any other way, whether self-contrived, or received by tradition from their fathers. What God in Christ gives we cannot pay for, but we ought most humbly and thankfully to accept.

4. The consequences of receiving or rejecting the divinely attested Redeemer : *He that hath the Son hath life ; he that*

hath not the Son of God hath not life. He who has the Son as his Redeemer, or who clings to Him by faith, has the life just spoken of ; he who does not so cling to the Son of God is utterly destitute of that life. He abideth in death. Eternal life, in its beginning and progress, is to the believer a present possession ; and so is eternal death to the unbeliever. Cf. Jno. 3 : 18, 36. He who clings to Christ is rich, Jas. 2 : 5, but he that will not lay hold of the Son of God is poor, and blind, and naked. Rev. 3 : 17, 18.

6. B K L syr vg by water and blood, and so Oec Thph and Tertulian ; A cop sah add and the Spirit, *kai pneumatos*. A B (according to Mai and Tischendorf) L S Jesus Christ ; B (according to Lachmann) some cursives Jesus the Christ. *Dia* with gen., and a verb of motion : to come through water and blood ; by that way. As to come through fighting, Herod. 6, 9. Or, if the primary signification of the preposition be retained : *He who came between water and blood* ; he who came, between his baptism and death, as priest, or during that interval. (See Harrison's "Greek Prepositions and Cases of Nouns.") *En* with the dative, like the dative of manner and circumstance in classical Greek ; or, in connection with, with. *This is He who came by water and blood*. Calvin (followed by Dickson and others) thinks there is an allusion to the ceremonial washings and typical sacrifices of the ancient economy, and that the sense is : Jesus the Messiah came with a sanctifying and expiatory power. This is in itself true, and is an ingenious interpretation. But it cannot be proved that *water*, by itself, means a purifying power. Grotius explains *water* of Christ's innocence or moral purity, to which a similar objection applies ; for it cannot be shown that *water*, by itself or with no descriptive adjunct, means moral purity. Others explain *water* and *blood* of the two sacraments, or ceremonial ordinances, of the Christian Church. But to institute or consecrate water for the disciples, and to come himself by water and blood, are very different things. Neither can it be proved that the word *blood*, by itself, denotes the Lord's Supper.

7, 8. As to the words above enclosed in brackets, the question is : *Were they written by the Apostle, or are they an interpolation of transcribers ?*

The Apostle (and so of the other sacred writers) was inspired ; not his transcribers. And it would indeed be an astonishing miracle, if the latter were as transcribers infallible ; which the evidence (specimens of which are given in this work) wholly disproves. Most of the various readings are indeed of little importance ; some cannot be expressed in

English, and none, even the most important, invalidate a single doctrine of divine revelation. And we ought to be grateful to God that all the researches of scholars, whether friendly to the Holy Scriptures or not, tend to and end in this result.

Trinitarians and Anti-trinitarians have very naturally entered into this controversy, and able and learned works have been published by both. It does not comport with the design of the present work to handle this question in detail, but we indicate our judgment in the matter as follows :

Questions of fact, like the one before us, must be decided by historical evidence, and by that alone. And we agree with the most eminent critical editors of the N. T., and with others, in considering the bracketed words as spurious, or not written by the Apostle.

I. This they prove by every kind of available historical evidence : 1. *These words are not found in any of the ancient Greek manuscripts.* (They first occur in codex Montfortianus, a cursive of the 16th century.) 2. *They are not found in the ancient versions.* Not, for example, in the Peshito or ancient Syriac version, nor in the Coptic and Sahidic versions. Not in the version of Jerome (am). Not in the Latin vulgate until the eighth century. 3. *They are not found in the ancient Greek fathers ; not even in those who contended with the Arians.* (Vigilius of Thapsus, towards the close of the 5th century, is the first Latin writer who cites them ; but not precisely, nor in the order in which they appear in c. t. : Joannes evangelista ad Parthos *Tres sunt*, inquit, *qui testimonium perhibent in terra, aqua sanguis et caro, et tres in nobis sunt ; et tres qui testimonium perhibent in celo, pater verbum et spiritus, et hi tres unum sunt—i.e.,* There are three who testify on earth, the water, blood, and flesh, and the three are in us ; and there are three who testify in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one. Tertullian evidently reasons from the gospel of John, especially 10 : 30, and the same is probable of Cyprian, De Eccl. Unit. 5. (See Tischendorf, N. T.)

How, then, did the interpolation originate? Most likely, from a forced allegorical interpretation of the genuine text. (See Facundus and Augustine, cited by Tischendorf, and by Lardner, vol. 5, p. 102.)

II. When every kind of available historical evidence concurs in proving a passage spurious, no internal evidence, no critical conjecture, is admissible. But to those who insist on what they call the internal evidence in the present case, the following question is proposed : How can a real or supposed testimony of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, concerning the oneness of their essence to the inhabitants of heaven, prove the divine mission of Christ as priest to men on earth. What relation has the latter to the former in the way of proof? The very

scope of the Apostle, then, shows that the words in brackets are not genuine.

And the three agree in one. Agree in one, is a happy and accurate, though free translation of *eis to hen eisin*. We take *eisin* as = *iasin*, from *eimi*, to go; not from *eimi*, to be: and the three go to the one thing—*i.e.*, agree in one, or wholly concur in their testimony. Are for, or to, the one thing, is hardly a Greek idiom expressive of consent, or concurrent testimony.

9. K L syr Oec Thph which; A B S vg that (2 *hoti*). We prefer c. t. But the latter reading amounts to the same thing: *For this is the testimony of God* (not a general and indefinite thing, but), *the fact that He hath testified concerning His Son.*

Conclusion of the Epistle, 13-21.

¹³ These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: ¹⁵ and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. ¹⁶ If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. ¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

¹⁸ We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not. ¹⁹ *And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

²⁰ And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

1. The chief scope of the epistle further explicated. Cf. 1 : 3, 4, and Jno. 20 : 31. *These things* (all that precedes) *have I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God* (see notes on 3 : 23), *in order that ye may know that ye have eternal life*: so the text appears in the oldest manu-

scripts and versions, but other manuscripts and commentators add : *and in order that ye may believe in the name of the Son of God—i.e.,* that your faith in Him may increase.

Eternal life is a present possession to the believer. It begins at regeneration, or when we trust in Christ, the incarnate Son of God, as our Redeemer. 5 : 1. From that moment “our inner man is renewed day by day,” or *we have eternal life*, the seed of God abiding in us. 3 : 9, 15. At the coming of Christ eternal life will pervade our complete nature. This is promised. 2 : 25, 28 ; Phil. 3 : 20, 21 ; Col. 3 : 3, 4. But the continuous sanctification of the soul is a present possession : we have it now and here. Jno. 3 : 36.

We may know that we have it : not conjecture wish, or come to a probable conclusion, but *know*, or be certainly convinced ; and one great design of this epistle is to teach us *the right method* of obtaining this knowledge. It is ours, for example, if we direct our faith to the name of the Son of God. But this faith, if genuine (as before stated), will lead us to confess Him as such, and will work in and by all the forms of holy love ; love to God, to Christ, to the brethren, and to mankind, or the cheerful keeping of God’s commandments.

To attain this knowledge is not only the privilege, but the duty of believers. Cf. Heb. 6 : 11, 12 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 10, with vs. 5-9. And the unambiguous infallible tests given us by Christ’s apostle in this epistle to guide us to a right decision in the matter, are in all respects superior to all the volumes of casuistry ever written by uninspired men. The latter, by their minute distinctions, perplex and confound ; but John brings us straight to Christ, the incarnate Son of God, to faith in Him, and shows how it works in all kinds of holy love, and then he says : If ye believe in the name of the Son of God, ye may know that ye have eternal life.

Now, can a professed disciple of Christ justify himself in poring year after year on the question : Am I a child of God ? Do I truly believe in Christ ? There is no good ex-

cuse for such pendulum-oscillations of a morbid soul ; men of a melancholy temperament and those of a scarcely discernible intellect excepted. And that for two reasons : The tests given are *perfectly intelligible ; it being a reflection on Christ Himself to suppose the contrary*. A non-decision in this matter *cripples the energy and usefulness of believers ;* for who will or can work for the Redeemer's glory as he ought and might, if doubtful whether he belongs to the army of Christ, or to the camp of Satan ? 2 Cor. 13 : 5.

2. The confidence which believers have as to the efficacy of prayer, for themselves, and for others who sin not unto death. *And this is the confidence which we have towards Him* (in our approaches to God in the name of His Son, 3 : 21 ; Jno. 14 : 13, 14), namely, *that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us*, listens to us or is disposed to grant our petitions ; *and if we know that He heareth us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked from Him :* that we have received and still receive from Him the mercy and grace desired. Heb. 4 : 16. (Notes on 3 : 22.)

This *parresia* is an unreserved freedom of speech to God, a holy boldness arising from the assurance that God is willing, for Christ's sake, to give us whatever we ask in accordance with His will. And we discover the will of God as to the objects of prayer in the following manner : (a) By those precepts which describe our duty in this particular, and by the promises that are generally connected with them. (b) By the Lord's Prayer, which contains a summary of the chief topics of acceptable worship. (c) Also by the predictions which relate to the believer's future glorification with Christ, and the overthrow of His implacable enemies. The precepts define the duty ; the promises and predictions show what is agreeable to God's revealed purpose ; the Lord's Prayer teaches us the primary and secondary objects of prayer, and that by the order of the petitions.

The principal grounds of the confidence spoken of are the

love of the Father in sending His Son as our Redeemer ; the absolute perfection of His priestly work in our stead and for our benefit, both on earth and in heaven ; and the illuminating and sanctifying power of the Spirit in our souls : facts as well ascertained as any in the whole circle of the sciences.

Prayer to God in the name of Christ is efficacious as a divinely prescribed means of obtaining all that God has promised, in the time and order which He in infinite wisdom and goodness has appointed ; and that not only for ourselves, but also for our brethren, with one exception. *If any one see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and he will give him life*, I mean to those that sin not unto death. *There is a sin unto death : I do not say that he shall pray concerning that. All unrighteousness is sin ; and there is a sin not unto death.*

Unto death—i.e., tending towards and leading to it. *Death*, a state of perpetual sin and misery, the opposite of *life*, or a state of perpetual holiness and happiness. Cf. vs. 11, 12 ; 3 : 14, 15. *A sin unto death* is a presumptuous transgression, leading to and ending in the utter ruin of men. (Notes on Jas. 1 : 15.) *A sin not unto death*, is a sin of infirmity, the opposite of presumptuous and malignant. *To those that sin not unto death*, is a clause explanatory of the pronoun *him* that precedes it : I do not refer to one alone so sinning, but to that class of persons. If any Christian see his brother (one who professes to be a child of God) so sinning, *he shall ask—i.e.*, ask God to forgive and bring him to the right path, *and he will give him life*, God will forgive him, or annul the sentence of death, the wages of sin, in his case. And what a wonderful promise it is ! What a delightful motive to pray for our erring brethren ! How much better are such petitions than unseemly bickerings, fault-finding* and recriminations ! If loving expostulation with a sinning brother and fervent prayer for his eternal well-being prevailed among those who call themselves Christians, and are associated in the same visible church,

what glory would redound to Christ, who died that we might live through Him, and love one another !

But what is the sin unto death ? It is not the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit ; for that consists in attributing the miracles wrought by Christ (miracles of omnipotent love, miracles wrought by Him, filled as He was with the Spirit of Grace) to the agency of Satan, the most malignant spirit in the universe. And the fearful warning which our Lord uttered concerning that blasphemy, was addressed to those who in the most insolent manner rejected Him as the Christ. Mat. 12 : 24-37. But John here speaks of a sin committed by a brother, or a professed disciple of Christ, one who once associated with believers.

It is not simply final impenitence—*i.e.*, a persistence in any known sin or course of sinning, a living and dying with a seared conscience, even when committing heinous transgression ; for those who have no knowledge of Christ, and of brotherhood in the church, may so sin unto death, Rom. 1 : 32, as well as those who are called brothers. Jas. 1 : 15.

But the sin unto death here spoken of is apostasy, or an open and persistent rejection of Christ, and of redemption through Him, by those who once professed to be Christians ; the shipwreck they make of the faith and a good conscience, examples of which we have in Hymenæus, Philetus, and Alexander, mentioned by Paul, 1 Tim. 1 : 19, 20 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 14, 15 ; 2 : 16-18, and in the Emperor Julian, the apostate. It is a sin in which a knowledge of the Gospel is united with a proud blaspheming rejection of Christ, who came by water and blood.

They who thus sinned unto death could easily be known. They manifested their malicious rejection of Christ as the Redeemer by forsaking the society of the faithful ; by taking part in the worship of idolaters, and in all the abominable sins connected with such worship, 5 : 21 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 3, 4, and by co-operating with an ungodly world in a murderous persecution of the disciples. 3 : 11-15. And apostates can

be seen now, abandoning the church of Christ, disregarding their solemn vows of love and obedience, and either relapsing into a frigid indifference, or serving Satan and divers lusts with a fiery zeal and restless activity.

The sin unto death is a sin committed by a *brother* ; a sin which others *may see* him committing (as is taught by implication) ; a sin *concerning which the Apostle does not command us to pray*, or even to cherish a desire and intention of so doing (intimated by *hina*), and hence a sin peculiarly heinous, and one that is never forgiven.

To pray without a divine command or promise is by no means a Christian's duty. And there is no hope of the salvation of an obstinate apostate. There is no ground to expect that he will or can be pardoned, because he insolently rejects the only propitiation for sins, and Him who offered it. And there is no hope of his repentance, because, by so despising the only Saviour, he insults the Spirit of grace, the only efficient producer of it. Heb. 10 : 26-31.

In order to guard against presumption on the one hand and melancholy dejection on the other, the Apostle adds : *All unrighteousness is sin* ; all that is not right when judged of by God's law is sin, not a trifle, not a slight evil, but disrespect to the highest authority and love. 3 : 4, 5. Hence, when I speak of a sin not unto death, do not for a moment suppose that the commission of any sin is allowable. *And yet there is a sin not unto death* : therefore despair not of obtaining forgiveness for yourselves and others who so sin. (How and why there are sins not unto death, is explained in the notes on 2 : 1, 2 ; 1 : 7-9.) Every sin, inasmuch as it shows a disregard to the authority of God, deserves death ; still some sins are more heinous than others, such as sins of pure malignity, like apostasy, persistent impenitence, and the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

3. The renewed sin not unto death, but persevere in holiness ; and they are delivered from the deadly power of Satan, to whom all others are subject. *We know that every one who hath been begotten of God sinneth not*—i.e., sinneth

not unto death, of which the Apostle has just spoken, *but he, because begotten of God, keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not* : has no deadly power over him, does not touch the seat of life (as "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." Ps. 105 : 15. Cf. Gen. 26 : 29). He, because of his regeneration, *keepeth himself*, is ever self-vigilant, keeping his heart with all diligence, struggling against all temptations to evil, and with the shield of faith quenching the fiery darts of the wicked one. Eph. 6 : 16 ; Prov. 4 : 23. So he keepeth, or *watcheth himself*. That these things are so *we know*, as apostles by revelation from the Spirit of Truth, and as children of God from our own experience.

We know that we are of God, and the whole world, all that are not of God or unregenerate, *lieth in the wicked one* : remains lying. It seems to be a condensed expression = lieth in the arms of the malignant one ; which is a substitution for a complete passive subjection to his power. As a sleeping child in the arms of a murderer, so are all the unrenewed in the power and control of Satan, who has not a spark of truth or love within him. What an accurate but frightful picture of the great majority of mankind as now existing ! The learned and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, the famous and the unknown, the powerful and the oppressed, all asleep in the arms of Satan ! And they the most asleep who deny his existence and malignity.

En to ponero : either masculine or neuter. Eng. Vers. has the latter, *lieth in wickedness* ; prostrate in a sea of sin. The former explanation is favored by ver. 18, and by John's usage, 3 : 12 ; 2 : 13, 14. The latter, by the seeming contrast between *sinneth not* and *lieth in wickedness*. But since the fact that the wicked one toucheth not the regenerate immediately precedes, we hold that the allusion is to Satan, the great author and promoter of all kinds of sin. They who are under his control are entangled in his snares, because they are bound by the cords of their own sins, and

so multitudes serve the greatest despot in the universe, without being aware of it.

4. The gracious benefits or privileges which the Son of God confers upon the renewed. *But* (notwithstanding the whole world lieth in the wicked one) *we know that the Son of God is come*, hath come, is present, or is here (Lk. 15 : 27 ; Jno. 4 : 47 ; 8 : 42, Gr.), *and hath given us understanding*, a power or faculty of spiritual discernment, *in order that we may know the True One ; and we are in the True One, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the True God, and eternal life.*

The Apostle here speaks of Christ as *the Son of God*, or in His divine nature ; and He, "by His Godhead, grace, and Spirit, is at no time absent from us. Cf. Mat. 28 : 20. And as thus present, He hath given us a faculty of spiritual discernment, *that we may know the True One*, know God as our Father and Friend, 2 : 3-6, which is an unspeakable gift from "the Son of His love." The *chrisma* is from Christ. He teaches us by His Spirit, through the Word, and so gives us the ability to know God. (2 : 20, 27.)

And we are in the True One by being *in His Son Jesus Christ*. We are in the Son by faith and love, and so in the Father ; the Holy Spirit producing and increasing this most blessed union or friendship, this communion with the Father and the Son. (Notes on 1 : 3 ; 2 : 5 ; 3 : 24 ; 4 : 13. Cf. Rom. 8 : 9, 10. "But ye are not in the flesh, but *in the Spirit*, if indeed *the Spirit of God* dwelleth in you ; but if any one hath not *the Spirit of Christ*, he is none of His. But if *Christ* is in you," etc.)

This, this one, or the same—namely, His Son Jesus Christ, *is the True God, and eternal life*. *Life* by metonymy for the author or procuring cause of it. 5 : 11 ; 4 : 9.

The words, *This is the True God*, cannot refer to the Father, for the following reasons : (1.) Because *the Son of God* is the principal person spoken of in this verse ; the True One, or the Father, being mentioned as the great sub-

ject of the Son's teaching, and as the One in whom we are, by being in the Son. (2 : 24.) (2.) Such an interpretation introduces a needless tautology, equivalent to the True God is the True God, and this thrice repeated ; and a tautology that is meaningless, since the wildest heretics have never denied the supreme Godhead of the Father. None but Atheists do that. (3.) There is no necessity, grammatical or logical, for referring the demonstrative pronoun to the more remote antecedent, cf. 5 : 6 ; Jno. 1 : 2, Gr. ; inasmuch as the Son of God is the Eternal Life that was with the Father, the Word who was with God, and was God. His assumption of our nature did not, and could not, annihilate His divine nature. Rev. 2 : 8, 18. (4.) If the Son is not the True God, the apostles (and the same must be said of the ancient prophets) were authors and promoters of idolatry. Cf. 1 Cor. 1 : 2 ; Rom. 9 : 5 ; Rev. 5 : 9-14.

Alford and others insist that Jno. 17 : 3, shows that John here refers to the Father. But in that passage (in which alone our Lord calls Himself Jesus Christ) *the only True God*, as well as *the True One* here, distinguishes the Father from all false and fictitious gods, and all gods adored in and by means of idols. And in Jno. 17 : 3, *the only True God*, also and especially distinguishes the Father from *the God-man*, Jesus Messiah, or the only begotten Son *whom He sent* in our nature, and as our Redeemer. So Paul explains it. 1 Thes. 1 : 9, 10, as well as John in this epistle, 4 : 9, 10, 14.

No distinction can be made between God and God, for there is but One God. Yet in the Godhead there are eternal distinctions, or personal relations, indicated by the terms Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is perfectly right, therefore, to say of any of the three persons, This is the True God. In such a proposition the subject *this* describes the personality, the predicate, *the True God*, the one essence, substance, or nature. John then ends his epistle as he began it.

The final and affectionate warning : *Little children, keep*

yourselves from idols. Guard yourselves, and that by keeping at a distance from all the idols around you, all the objects and modes of pagan worship. The Apostle takes it for granted that the tinder of superstition is not instantly taken out of a regenerate soul. Hence He commands them to keep away from every thing that has a tendency to enkindle it, such as visiting shrines dedicated to false gods, eating meat, or drinking wine offered to them in such temples, and the like. Cf. 1 Cor. 12 : 3 ; 1 Cor. 8, and 10 : 14-21.

Idols = images, pictures, or statues of false gods, 1 Cor. 12 : 2 ; Rev. 9 : 20 ; hence *of the false gods* themselves, worshipped in and by these images ; as here and in Rev. 9 : 20 ; 1 Cor. 8 : 7 ; 10 : 19, 20.

The pagans had gods many and lords many. 1 Cor. 8 : 5. They deified the external works of God ; either nature as a whole, as the materialistic pantheists, or in its parts, as the star-worshippers ; putting gods also in the air and sea, the trees, rivers, and fountains of water. This is generally called *Nature-worship*. They deified eminent deceased men, as Jupiter and Romulus, and even men living in the mortal body, as the Roman Emperors. This is *genius*, or *Hero-worship*. They also made gods of demons, good and bad, which we may call *Angel-worship*. (Col. 2 : 18.) And this idolatry was upheld by the power of the magistrates, the craft of the priests, the misdirected learning of the philosophers, the avarice of the artisans, and the very great ignorance of the people.

The worship of Mary and other departed saints is the same in kind as genius or hero-worship. But to worship even the True God by an image is idolatry. Acts 7 : 41 ; Ex. 20 : 4-6. And there is but One Mediator between God and men, but One Advocate with the Father. 1 Tim. 2 : 5 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 1.

Materialists deify force ; that is their idol. Some pantheists deify themselves, imagining that what they call god only knows that it exists, when *they* are pleased to exert their mental powers. Their idol is their own intellect.

Covetous men worship gold and silver, houses and lands ; the sensual do homage to their animal appetites ; the more cultivated worship their friends and kindred ; while those who are eager for fame adore the breath of other men, as vain and deceitful as themselves.

Any thing which takes that place in our intellect and affections which is due only to God and Christ is to us an idol. Who can say, I am not guilty ?

“ The dearest idol I have known,
Whate’er that idol be ;
Help me to tear it from the throne,
And worship only Thee.

“ So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame :
So pure light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.”

13. A B S syr cop vg have the text as above translated, A *hoi pisteuontes*, B S *tois pisteuousin* ; but K L Oec Thph as c. t. 16. S is singular in reading thou shalt ask and shalt give. *He shall ask, and he (God) will give*, etc. Others thus : *He shall ask, and (by asking) shall give*, etc., cf. Jas. 5 : 15, 19, 20. Either way, the sense is the same.

18. A K L S Origen Did Thph Oec himself, *heauton*, A B vg him, *auton* : the vulgate, *Sed generatio Dei conservat eum*, is singular as a reading, but as a scholium correct. The perf. part., he that hath been begotten is = he that is renewed, denoting the permanency of the renovation : the aor. part. refers not only to his spiritual generation as a fact of the past, but is also a causal participle : cf. Jas. 1 : 18 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 20, Gr. Thus explained, there is no necessity of supposing that both participles are indetical in signification ; as Lillie and others affirm.

The malignant one doth not *touch* him : a metaphor. He never gets near enough to inflict a fatal blow, by inciting him to sin unto death : or, to sin as the tempter himself does, malignantly, always, and with constantly increasing enormity.

20. B K that we may know ; A L S that we know (*hina* with the indicative denoting a purpose in some degree accomplished). But in the latter reading omicron is probably used by mistake for omega. A B S eternal life, K the eternal life.

21. A B S syr cop sah omit amen.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE SECOND AND THIRD EPISTLES OF JOHN.

I. *Their Genuineness.*

The first witness we cite is the unknown author of the *Muratorian Canon*, written about A.D. 170. (See Hug's Introduction to the N. T. by Fosdick, § 19. The ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol. ix., pp. 154, 160, 162, and Braune.)

After speaking of John's gospel, he adds: "What marvel is it, then, that John brings forward these several things so constantly *in his epistles* also, saying in his own person, 'What we have seen with our eyes, and heard with our ears, and our hands have handled, that have we written:'" which is a loose reference to the proem of John's first epistle. Afterward he says: "The epistle of Jude, indeed, and *two belonging to the above-named John* (or bearing the name of John), *are reckoned among the catholic* [epistles]:" are put in that category, although, strictly speaking, they are private letters, expressive of Christian love. This is according to an emendation proposed by some: *in catholicis*. (The text is: Epistola sane Judæ, et superscriptæ Joannis duæ *in catholica* habentur; which, if genuine, means, Are held as John's in the catholic (universal) church.) *The above-named John* means the apostle, for the writer, discoursing of his gospel, calls him "one of the disciples." And he seems to say by implication, one is a catholic epistle, and two are private, though put among the catholic epistles.

The testimony of this very ancient writer, owing to the translator or transcriber, or to both, is somewhat ambigu-

ous ; which is greatly to be regretted. As it is, we have his testimony that two epistles of John are genuine. But if he meant to distinguish two epistles of John from the first previously alluded to, as just now suggested, then we have his testimony to the genuineness of the three.

Irenæus of Lyons in Gaul, originally from Asia Minor, about A.D. 181. He was a disciple of Polycarp, and he of John. Polycarp, Irenæus, and Papias are from the school of John, and by them testimony is traced up to the time of the apostle. Papias, as Eusebius says, "made use of testimonies from the first epistle of John." So does Polycarp in the only brief letter of his that is extant ; and Irenæus likewise, 3, 16, 5.

Irenæus also cites the second epistle thus : 3, 16, 8. "These are they against whom the Lord has cautioned us beforehand ; and His disciple, in his epistle already mentioned, commands us to avoid them, when he says : 'For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Take heed to them, that ye lose not what ye have wrought.' "

This is a citation of 2 Jno., vs. 7, 8, as if the words were in the first epistle ; which may be accounted for by supposing a slip of the memory. Be this as it may, it is certain that Irenæus quotes words from this second epistle as a writing of John, the disciple of the Lord.

Again, 1, 16, 3 : "And John, the disciple of the Lord, has intensified their condemnation, when he desires us not to bid them good speed ; for, says he, He that biddeth them good speed is a partaker of their evil deeds." 2 Jno., vs. 10, 11.

Clement of Alexandria (toward the close of the second century and the beginning of the third), in his *Hypotyposes*, "wrote brief notes on Jude and the rest of the Catholic Epistles," as Eusebius expresses it ; or, as Photius has it, Explained (beside other sacred books) the Catholic epistles.

And if the work called *Adumbrationes* be, as Lücke supposes, in the main a translation of the *Hypotyposes*, then Clement also expressly mentions the second epistle as John's : *Secunda Joannis epistola, quæ ad virgines scripta est, simplicissima est. Scripta vero est ad quendam Babyloniam Electam nomine, significat autem electionem ecclesiæ sanctæ.*

Origen speaks of these epistles as well known, and received by most as genuine. (Eus., E. H. 6, 25.)

Dionysius of Alexandria, A.D. 247, seems to admit the genuineness of these epistles. He describes them as short epistles, without the name of John, and with the designation of the elder. (Eus., E. H. 7, 25.)

Aurelius of Chollabi, in North Africa, in the Council of Carthage, A.D. 256, thus cites : "*John the apostle* in his epistle says, If there come any to you," etc. 2 Jno., v. 10. (Cypriani Op. De Haer. Bapt.)

Didymus of Alexandria, about A.D. 370, wrote commentaries on the seven Catholic Epistles, still extant in Latin. *Alexander of Alexandria* concludes his letter to his fellow-ministers of the catholic church, about A.D. 324, as follows : "For it is incumbent on us who are Christians, to withdraw ourselves from all those who speak or entertain a thought against Christ, as from those who are resisting God, and are destroyers of the souls of men : 'neither should we even say good speed to such, lest at any time we become partakers of their sins,' as the blessed John commanded." (Socrates, E. H. 1, 6.) But when we arrive at the fourth century, further citations are superfluous.

Irenæus, then, may be considered as speaking both for the churches in Asia Minor and Gaul ; and that not long after the death of the apostle. And *Irenæus* quotes 1 and 2 John as writings of that apostle, but he nowhere rejects the third epistle as spurious.

The author of the Muratonian Canon certainly recognizes two epistles as John's, if not three. What branch of the church he speaks for is unknown. (Hug supposes that he represents the Church of Rome, in the beginning of the third century ; Wieseler, a teacher of catachumens in some church to us unknown, about A.D. 170).

From the Alexandrian church we have Clement, Origen, and Dionysius, Alexander and Didymus (to mention no others of the fourth century) as witnesses.

From the North African church we have Aurelius, and the members of the council associated with him ; for it is not at all probable that he would have quoted a spurious production, and presented it to his colleagues as a writing of John the apostle.

The Syrian church did not at first receive these epistles ; at least they are not in the Peshito. But in the fourth century Ephrem quotes them as John's.

When we consider how short these epistles are, that they contain little of a didactic nature, and that they are addressed, not to churches, but to private persons, it will not appear strange that they were not often cited by writers of the ante-Nicene church. We have, in fact, all the historical evidence in the matter that could be reasonably expected.

Objections.

1. If these epistles were written by John, why did he not say the Apostle instead of the Elder ? We answer that modesty is consistent with dignity, and adorns it with peculiar beauty. And if Peter called himself a co-elder, 1 Ep. 5 : 1, why may not John call himself *the Elder* by way of eminence ? If, when he wrote these epistles, he was the only surviving apostle, as is very likely, then *the Ruler* is full of meaning. If the writer had alluded to his age simply, he would have written *ho presbutes*, as Paul to Philemon, or *ho geron*, not *ho presbuteros*, which is generally a title of office or dignity.

2. The absence of the writer's name is no valid objection to the genuineness of these epistles ; for John in his other writings, with one exception, never alludes to himself but by way of circumlocution. Besides, the bearer of the letters could easily testify as to their author.

In the Revelation John's name precedes, but that is in strict accordance with all the Prophetical books of Scripture. It is not so with the sacred Historical books. And as to epistles in danger of being intercepted by deceivers, the best way was the one adopted by the apostle—namely, to send the letters anonymously, and let the bearer explain from whom they proceeded. Neither is it likely that John's intimate friends, such as those addressed in these letters, were unacquainted with his handwriting, and that he used the expression the Elder to designate himself.

3. To ascribe these letters to John the Presbyter, a contemporary of the apostle, as some do, is against all the evidence, specimens of which have been adduced. It is not at all probable that Jerome and Eusebius could decide better concerning the authorship of these letters than the earliest and best witnesses in the case, Irenæus, the author of the Muratorian canon, and Clement of Alexandria. (We are inclined to think that Presbyter John, a so-called cotemporary of the apostle, never existed ; and that the stories about the tombs of both as seen at Ephesus, and the alleged dependence of Papias on the aforesaid presbyter, are pure fictions ; “ pious frauds ” devised and used to fling discredit on the Apocalypse. Eusebius, E. H. 3, 39. Certainly, in the chapter just referred to, the prejudiced Origenist is more apparent than the honest and candid historian.)

4. The spirit manifested in these epistles is not at all unbecoming an apostle of Christ. For genuine Christian love never confounds truth with error, or supposes that the latter is the mother of righteousness. And they who knowingly pervert the gospel, especially the revealed doctrine concerning the Redeemer, should never be welcomed and entertained by believers as teachers. This would be to re-

ceive the emissaries of Satan as ministers of Christ. And with respect to such selfish and ambitious men as Diotrephes, the apostle had a perfect right to inflict such punishment as the Spirit directed ; and the pre-intimation of severer punishment is the designation of the ringleader by name. It is at the same time a fair and charitable admonition.

II. *Persons addressed.*

The second epistle is written to *eklekte kuria*, lit. an elect lady ; or, *eclecte cyria*, as it may also be written in our characters. But neither ancient nor modern critics agree as to the sense.

1. Some take *Eclecte* as a proper name. But this at first sight seems to be forbidden by ver. 13, where the word is used as an adjective : “ thy elect sister.”

2. Others hold that *Cyria* (or *Kuria*) is so used ; which seems to be confirmed by v. 5, “ And now I entreat thee, *Cyria* ;” which seems more natural than “ lady,” or mistress. The only objection is that then the article should have been put before *Cyria* and the order, as in 3 Jno. 1, thus : To *Cyria* the elect. But such a mode of address is not always observed. To elect *Cyria* is also natural.

3. But the objection just stated is wholly removed, if we suppose her full name to be *Eclecte Cyria*, and that the apostle in ver. 13 alludes to the primary signification of *Eclecte*.

4. Others agree with Eng. Vers., and render, To an elect lady, or to the elect lady. But to address a Christian woman and describe her by two appellatives, without mentioning her name, seems strange.

5. Others, perceiving this difficulty, have attempted to explain the inscription allegorically ; either of the church in general, or of some particular congregation. But *kuria* is never used in the N. T. as = *ecclesia* ; and to suppose that the church at Babylon was intended, because *sunelecte* occurs in 1 Pet. 5 : 13, is to erect an hypothesis on a spider’s web ; and so of similar conjectures.

Besides, if *kuria* be taken allegorically, so must the rest

of the inscription. But when intelligent beings are used allegorically, they, described as acting in one sphere or relation, represent such beings acting in another sphere or relation : as in the parables of the Sower and the Tares of the field. Now, according to this indisputable law of the allegory, if there be an allegory here, then the church can not be intended at all, either universal or particular, or any of its officers or members ; the Presbyter and Eclecte Cyria representing agents giving and receiving imperial rescripts for the good of the State—wholly outside of the pale of the church ; otherwise, there would be no difference between the persons representing and represented, the allegory breaking down and disappearing ; all which is sufficiently incoherent and absurd.

Moreover, to employ an allegory in the inscription of a letter is wholly contrary to apostolic usage ; and Scriptural allegories are always described in the historic or past tense, which is not the case here ; and also preceded or followed by an explanation, expressed or implied.

It is evident, then, that the inscription must be literally taken, and in our judgment Eclecte Cyria and her children are the persons addressed.

The third epistle is addressed to *Gaius*, or Caius. But a Macedonian has this name, Acts 19 : 29, one of Derbe, Acts 20 : 4, and another of Corinth, Rom. 16 : 23 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 14 ; and it is impossible to say whether any one of these friends of Paul was then alive, and addressed by the apostle. All that is certain is, that this Gaius was a distinguished man in the society of Christians among whom he dwelt, and a firm friend of the apostle.

It is generally supposed that these epistles were written towards the close of the first century, and not long after the first epistle.

THE
SECOND EPISTLE
OF
JOHN.



COMMENTARY.

¹ The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth ; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth ; ² for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever. ³ Grace be (marg. Gr. shall be) with you, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

The inscription : *The Elder to Eclecte Cyria and her children, whom I love in truth* (the I being expressed in the original is emphatic : whom I, whatever may be said of the deceivers, love in truth, or with unfeigned Christian love) ; *and not I only, but also all who have known the truth*, all acquainted with the gospel at the present place of writing, and who have heard of your liberality. The ground or reason of the apostle's love is next stated : *for the truth's sake, that abideth in us : and with us it shall be for ever.* (Notes on 1 Jno. 2 : 24.)

The apostle calls himself *the Elder*, or the Presbyter, not so much to describe his age as his office : the only ruler, appointed immediately by Christ Himself, now living on earth. Whether we translate, *To Eclecte Cyria*, or *To the elect Cyria*, there seems to be an allusion to the primary signification of the former word ; as in the last verse. Now, it is the highest of all honors to be chosen of God in Christ, in order to obtain unspeakable glory in the everlasting kingdom ; and to have that choice manifested to us in and by sanctification of the Spirit ; and, as a consequence of that sanctification, to walk in truth and love. (Notes on Jas. 2 : 5 and 1 Pet. 1 : 2.)

True Christian love is based on revealed truth—that is, on the perception of that truth as ever working in the hearts of our fellow-disciples. We love them because they are of the truth, 1 Jno. 3 : 19, and because *the truth abideth in them*, as a permanent instrumental cause of holy acts, internal and external. Cf. 1 Jno. 1 : 8, 10. We love them because they thus exhibit the fruits of righteousness.

The apostle unexpectedly adds : *and with us it shall be for ever.* *With us* = *among us* Christians, living on earth ; as in 1 Jno. 4 : 17, Gr. In this manner the everlasting continuance of the church on earth is predicted, and as adhering to revealed truth. (See notes below.)

The salutation (when compared with the later Pauline epistles, Tim., Tit., and Philemon) has various peculiarities. (1.) It is, strictly speaking, a prediction, not a prayer : *There shall be with you* (or, *among you*) *grace, mercy, peace*, etc. (2.) The preposition which John uses twice is *para*, not *apo* once, as with Paul. (3.) *The Son of the Father* is also an original expression, wholly in the style of John. (4.) The best authenticated reading omits “the Lord :” *from Jesus Christ*, the Son of the Father ; which is also after the manner of John. (5.) *In truth and love* are added, because they are spoken of immediately after, as is usual with our apostle. Cf. 1 Ep. 1 : 5 with vs. 6, 7 ; 3 : 24 with 4 : 1 ; 5 : 5 with ver. 6, etc. (Dickson long ago, in his preface to 1 Jno., noticed this characteristic of our apostle’s style : *Artificiosa valde est hujus Epistolæ Methodus. Nam ad modum catenæ, Christianæ fidei mysteria et axiomata connectuntur : semper enim ex fine præcedentis doctrinæ sequentem tractationem orditur.* But the *semper* should be taken cum grano salis, and the *artificiosa* should be referred to that natural skill, heightened by the Holy Spirit, which arises from the operations of a deeply contemplative mind.) Here, then, we have many internal evidences of the genuineness of this letter : no more undesigned coincidences of thought and expression could be compressed in the same space.

Grace refers to God's love as shown to the unworthy ; *mercy* to His love as shown to the miserable ; and *peace*, like the Hebrew *shalom*, means the complete blessedness that is the consequence of grace and mercy, or all the benefits of redemption, both in the world as it now is and as it shall be. This unspeakable grace and mercy, with all the joy that follows, originate from and flow into our hearts *from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father—i.e., from Jesus the Messiah, who in His divine nature is the Son of the Father.*

But how can it be known that we truly partake of this grace and mercy ? It is manifested *in truth and love—i.e.,* the reception of grace and mercy will be evident to you by living in the element, or moving in the sphere, of truth and love. (Compare the expressions, "In sanctification of the Spirit," "In obedience to the truth," 1 Pet. 1 : 2, 22, Gr.) When the objective truth becomes subjective, or the Word of God is ingrafted within us, pervading our faculties with its purifying power, then Grace and Mercy from the Father and the Son are manifested to us ; manifested in and by the work of the Spirit, inciting and enabling us to walk in truth and love.

1. *Whom I love in truth* (not "in the truth") : cf. 1 Jno. 3 : 18. The expressions, *in truth* and *for the truth's sake*, are an elegant paranomasia. The Elder's Christian love to the mother is assumed, and here he declares that he has the same unfeigned love for her children : *whom (hous)* may refer to both sons and daughters (*teknois*), Gal. 4 : 19, dwelling at home ; but in v. 4, *peripatountas* shows that sons alone are there alluded to.

3. K cop vg there shall be with you, B S there shall be with us. A B sah from Jesus Christ, vg from Christ Jesus ; K L cop from the Lord Jesus Christ ; S from (*apo*) God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, with an interpolation of *autou* after *the Son*. But *apo* in these salutations is more Pauline than Johannean (John indeed uses *apo* in Rev. 1 . 4, 5, but in a manner peculiar to himself, wholly unlike that of Paul), and the same must be said of *the Lord* before *Jesus Christ* ; while *autou* appears in S, evidently, by the blunder of some transcriber. We translate and punctuate what is generally admitted to be the genuine text, thus : The Presbyter to Eclecte Cyria and her children, whom I

love in truth—and not I only, but also all who have known the truth—for the truth's sake which abideth in us : and with us it shall be for ever. There shall be with you grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

And with us it shall be for ever. As to the perpetuity of the Church on earth, the following positions seem to us Scriptural : (1.) That the church will continue till Christ comes the second time, is evident from His own promises and predictions. Mat. 28 : 19, 20 ; Mk. 16 : 15, 16. (2.) That the church, militant on earth, will abide in the revealed doctrine concerning the Christ, is foretold by Himself (Mat. 16 : 18), a prediction that has been in process of fulfilment for more than eighteen hundred years : " Upon this rock," namely, the truth just confessed, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, " I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." Or, as the disciple whom Jesus loved here expresses it : With us the truth shall be for ever, although now many deceivers confess it not, v. 7. (3.) The church militant on earth, or as it will exist till the coming of our Lord, consists of the elect, gathered from among Jews and Gentiles. " God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name." Acts 15 : 14-17. " And (if God willing) to make known the riches of His glory upon the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory, even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Rom. 9 : 22-29. If such be the predestination of God, and the calling of men unto glory, if He so gathers His church during this dispensation, and that to make known the glorious riches of His grace, is it for you to object? Is your eye evil because He is merciful and good? Cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 1, 2 ; Eph. 1 : 1-6. There will indeed be, and there already is, a great apostasy in the visible church, and especially as this dispensation approaches its conclusion, 1 Tim. 4 ; 2 Tim. 3 ; 2 Thes. 2 ; but the elect will not be deceived. Lk. 18 : 7, 8 ; Mk. 13 : 22. (4.) At the Parousia of the God-man, and during the eternal ages following, the church triumphant on earth will consist of the glorified saints—*i.e.*, the transformed saints, or those changed from mortal to immortal in an instant at the advent of their Redeemer-King, and the risen saints, especially the latter. 1 Cor. 15 : 51-54, with Isa. 25 : 6-9 ; 1 Thes. 4 : 13-18. These will be the Bride of Christ, His Queen or coregents, the holy city or the New Jerusalem, the tabernacle of God with mankind, then His people. Rev. 19 : 5-7 ; 20 : 6 ; 21 chap. 22 : 1-5. With these, the glorified saints or church triumphant, the truth in a pre-eminent degree shall be for ever. Rev. 21 : 23 ; 22 : 5. Cf. Mat. 13 : 43. (5.) During the everlasting reign of Christ on earth, the sanctified nations and their kings will constitute the church of the unglorified, who will be guided and taught by the glorified coregents, as God and

the God-man direct. "And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell (tabernacle) with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, their God," etc. Rev. 21 : 1-4. "And the city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, that they should shine for it; for the glory of God lightened it, and its lamp the Lamb." There will be no need for the glorified saints to be taught by any created intelligences, even the highest and the best; for they will receive their instructions as coregents from God and the Redeemer. "And the nations [of the saved] shall walk in its light" (be guided by the instructions received from the glorified, as they receive them from God and the Redeemer); "and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it," etc. Rev. 21 : 23-27. Cf. Dan. 7 : 13, 14, 27. (Notes on Jas. 2 : 5 and 2 Pet. 1 : 16-19; 3 : 13.)

It will not be amiss here, both for exegetical and devotional purposes, to cite Eph. 3 : 20, 21 : "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be the glory in the church in Christ Jesus to all the generations of the age of the ages. Amen." (Gr.)

"The church in Christ Jesus," here spoken of by Paul, is the church of the unglorified on earth, or the saints living in the mortal body. For by the expression, "to all the generations," it is taken for granted that the men composing that church will, as now, continue to increase; and the phrase, "of the age of the ages," declares the everlasting continuance of that church. (Cf. Ps. 72 : 5; Isa. 59 : 20, 21; 65 : 23; Ezek. 37 : 24, 25.) It can relate to no other class of sanctified men; not to the disembodied, nor to the glorified. Lk. 20 : 34-36. And it is intimated that the unglorified saints to perpetual generations will be sanctified by the same Spirit that now works with omnipotent energy in us. And so unspeakable glory will redound to God and Christ in the salvation of men; that blessed work, reflecting the glory of God and the God-man, going on to all eternity. God, then, God in Christ will conquer, not Satan : to which we, with Paul, should add Amen.

The explanation now given of the perpetuity of the church, glorified and unglorified on earth, is confirmed by the special revelations made to Paul concerning it. See Eph. 1 : 9, 10; 3 : 3-11; Col. 1 : 20. (Compare Hodge and Turner on Ephesians, with D. N. Lord's Literary and Theological Journal, October, 1856.) The purpose of God there mentioned, and made known to Paul, is described by its great epoch or epochs : it is God's purpose *in reference to the dispensation of the fullness of the times—i.e.,* the millennial dispensation, and the restoration of all things consummated. It is a purpose concerning *the elect church*

(vs. 4-8), and *all* of the elect, whether now on earth or in heaven, whether Jews or Gentiles (3 : 6). And *the design* of it is, to gather them together into one blessed society intimately united with the Christ, the Great Redeemer-King : and that these wonderful truths, now revealed, may engage the attention not only of men, but of all ranks of angels, and lead them to look more closely at these proofs of the highly-variegated wisdom of God (3 : 9, 10).

⁴ I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. ⁵ And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. ⁶ And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. ⁷ For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. ⁸ Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. ⁹ Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed : ¹¹ for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

1. Occasion of the epistle : *I rejoiced greatly that I have found* (the perfect tense intimating that the joy still continues) *of thy children walking in truth*, out of or from among thy children sons walking in sincerity, or with Christian uprightness, *as we received commandment from the Father*.

Of thy children, does not necessarily mean some of thy children, implying that other members of her family were of a different character, since sons are intended, as *peripatountas* (mas. gen.) shows. *Walking* in truth, refers to the whole method of thinking, speaking, and acting, and to a constant increase in Christian sincerity, for *truth* is here opposed to pretence or hypocrisy. The sense in our idiom is : I rejoice greatly that I have found among the number

of thy children sons walking in truth. Where the apostle found, met with and became acquainted with them, is not said ; most probably at Ephesus, or some of the great cities in Asia Minor, where young men were exposed to many temptations. The apostle does not say, In the truth, but *in truth*, as in ver. 1 ; 2 Jno. vs. 3, 4 ; cf. 1 Ki. 3 : 6 ; Ps. 51 : 6. *As we received commandment from the Father*, is a clause which further explains what the apostle means by their *walking in truth*. The commandment relates especially to faith in Christ, Christian love, and holiness, vs. 7, 9-11 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 23. It was promulgated by the incarnate Son, but it originated from the Father, and so Cyria's children, as well as the apostle, received it. 1 Jno. 1 : 5, etc. ; Jno. 4 : 23.

As soon as the apostle discovered that Cyria's sons were living as genuine Christians, he wrote to express his Christian joy, and to cheer her and the children at home (ver. 1) with the good news, to allay their anxiety concerning the absent, and awaken their holy gratitude. He was also led to write to them for another reason, namely, to remind them that it was a perversion of Christian hospitality to give any encouragement to deceivers or antichristian teachers, 7-11. (Notes on 1 Jno. 2 : 12-14.)

We walk in Christian sincerity, when we obey the Father, commanding us, by His incarnate Son, and the apostles whom He chose, to walk in the light as He is in the light, to trust in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and to love one another. To judge of the reality of our confession in any other way, is misleading and fatal. A so-called intuitional moral consciousness, apart from the word and commandment of the Father, mystic reveries or self-complacent musings, dreams, trances, self-inflicted penances, " moping melancholy," or fitful gusts of pleasurable emotions, are no proofs that the heart is right in the sight of God. To walk according to our own opinions, feelings, and fancies, is one thing ; to walk as the Father commands, is another and a very different thing.

The great joy of a true minister of Christ is occasioned, not by his official station and ecclesiastical authority, but by perceiving indisputable indications of Christian sincerity and consistency in those whom he is accustomed to teach. On the contrary, it pierces him to the heart, to find the commandment of the Father disregarded, the example of the Redeemer ignored, and the spirit grieved.

2. The principal topics of the epistle follow. (*a.*) An exhortation to the constant cultivation of Christian love : *And now* (the case being as just stated, or having received such a commandment from the Father ; a logical expression, as in 1 Jno. 2 : 28) *I beseech thee, Cyria, not as writing to thee a new commandment, but that which we had from the beginning* (1 Jno. 2 : 7-11), *that we love one another.*

Unfeigned Christian love is intended, and the command in the form of an entreaty is, that they should ever aim (indicated by *hina*) at a more exact obedience in this particular ; and that to please the Father. The exhortation relates not only to Cyria, but also to her children, as is evident from the next verse : “ as *ye* heard from the beginning,” etc.

A woman's weakness, as well as her strength, lies in her curiosity and affections, which are easily excited, and by which she is rightly guided or misguided. And a Christian woman, conscious of her own love to the Redeemer, is apt to suppose that all who profess to be ministers of Christ are indeed so ; not being sufficiently cautious as to deceivers. So it was with Cyria, for the apostle takes it for granted that some of these deceivers had entered her house, and (which is a natural supposition as to deceivers) attempted to undermine his apostolical authority, and to estrange her affections and those of her family from “ the disciple whom Jesus loved ;” and that, perhaps, by novel revelations of their own, or by other devices learned in the school of Satan, vs. 7, 8, 10, 11 ; 1 Jno. 4 : 1. In such circumstances it was perfectly suitable for the aged and venerable Presbyter to entreat that Cyria's love to him as a Christian and an apostle should not wane, but increase.

A further description of the love intended : And *this is love*, the manifestation or effect of it, as in 1 Jno. 5 : 3, *that we walk according to His commandments*. We manifest our love to Him, if we ever aim and endeavor (*hina*) to behave as He requires. His commandments are summarily comprehended in faith and love. 1 Jno. 3 : 22-24. These precepts may also be considered as but one command, since love to God and to Christians can not exist without faith in Jesus as the Christ. 1 Jno. 5 : 1-3. Hence the apostle adds : *This is the commandment*, the great evangelical precept requiring the perpetual union of faith and love, *as ye heard from the beginning, that ye should walk in it*, or increase in faith which works by, and is inseparably connected with, love. And so the connection with v. 7 distinctly appears : Walk in love, which proceeds from faith, for the deceivers will seek to destroy your faith, and so your love. (Thus Gomarus, Huther, and Braune substantially interpret.)

The apostle, then, enforces the duty of Christian love as follows : It is enjoined by the highest possible authority, a commandment received by revelation from God, even the Father. It is a command well known, so that the plea of ignorance is unavailable. Christian love, arising from faith, is an effect of love to God, and it is genuine obedience to Him.

(b.) Adhere amidst all opposition to the revealed doctrine concerning Christ. In handling this subject the false teachers are first described : *For many deceivers entered (or, went forth) into the world*, have publicly appeared as teachers, *who confess not Jesus Christ coming in flesh*. This (a transition from the plural to the distributive singular) *is a deceiver, and an antichrist*, or antichristian deceiver by way of eminence. (The article is generic : cf. notes on 1 Jno. 2 : 22.)

In 1 Jno. 4 : 2, we have the perfect participle, *having come* in flesh ; in 5 : 6, the aorist participle = he who *came* by water and blood ; but here the present participle, *coming* in flesh. The perfect participle is used to denote the perma-

nency of the Redeemer's incarnation ; the aorist relates to His priestly work on earth as a fact of the past ; but why is the present participle here used ? Most say, In order to denote the general idea of the incarnation, without any reference to time. Now, while it must be admitted that a general idea is often expressed by the indicative present, it is not so certain that this is also done by the present participle. Œcumenius (cited by Lillie) thinks that the apostle used "coming" (*erchomenon*), and not "came" (*elthonta*), to designate those who denied both the first and the second advent of Christ. But it is forced to explain a present participle both of a past fact and a future event. Others say that John uses it in reference to the future second advent of Jesus Christ, and of that alone. Now the participle *coming*, when applied to a person, means either actually approaching, a begun bodily movement, or that one is on the point of coming. Jno. 6 : 14, Gr. ; 1 : 29. "Coming, sir," says a child as he hears his father's command, and makes ready to obey it. There is nothing forced or unnatural, then, in this interpretation. Besides, if the deceivers entertained by Cyria and her household had attempted to explain away the future advent of Christ in flesh, or explicitly denied it (as is not unlikely), it was in all respects becoming the apostle to remind them of what he had already written, 1 Jno. 2 : 28 ; 3 : 2, 3, and to brand that error as eminently antichristian ; as his friend and fellow-apostle had done before him. 2 Pet. 2 and 3. It is certain that they who deny the reality of the incarnation often take the chair of the scorner, and sneeringly ask, "Where is the promise of His coming?"

A warning to Cyria and her family follows : *Look to yourselves* (be vigilant, on the lookout for danger, as in Mk. 13 : 9, compared with vs. 5, 33, or, take heed to yourselves), *in order that we lose not what* (the things which) *we have labored for*, as in Jno. 6 : 27, *but that we receive a full reward—i.e.*, that we, both apostles and disciples, may not lose the benefit of our labors, but obtain a complete recom-

pense. In this, the common text, there is, as Gomarus expresses it, an elegant and forcible transition from the second person to the first ; the apostle exhorting to a duty binding on both : which is the best thing that can be said in favor of this reading. Cf. ver. 5 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 28 ; Jas. 3 : 1.

Another reading has the three verbs in the second person plural ; and still another (now generally received as genuine) thus : *Look to yourselves, that ye lose not what we have labored for, but that ye receive a full reward*—i.e., be self-vigilant, in order that ye lose not, by listening to antichristian teachers, the benefits of our labors as apostles, but that, by abiding in the doctrine of Christ, ye may receive at His coming and from Him a full reward, ver. 7. (1 Jno. 2 : 28.) *Look to yourselves, that ye lose not what we labored for*, are metaphors. Cf. 1 Cor. 3 : 9. *To receive a full reward* (complete wages), is a substitution. Cf. 1 Jno. 2 : 25.

The second coming of the Theanthropos in flesh is the hope of the church. Tit. 2 : 13. If we listen to deceivers explaining that away, then we reject the doctrine of Christ, and become infidels. The true Christ is the one proclaimed by prophets and apostles, not the myth devised and paraded by antichristian deceivers. If we reject the Christ of the Bible, we must sail in darkness to the blackness of everlasting darkness, and lose all the benefits we might otherwise obtain from the labors of the legates of Christ.

It is indisputable that there will be degrees of glory in the kingdom of our Redeemer. And if any of the regenerate play with error, give their ear to deceivers, or erect on the true doctrine concerning Christ their own fantastic wood, hay, and stubble, they must suffer loss, and especially when they see Jesus Christ coming in flesh, to reward his faithful followers. 1 Cor. 3 : 8-15.

Another reason for the admonition : *Every one who transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of the Christ, hath not God : he that abideth in the doctrine of the Christ, the same hath both the Father and the Son.* Look to yourselves, for every one who passeth by (as if unworthy of his belief or

notice, which is the literal meaning of *parabainon*) the revealed doctrine concerning the Christ, and does not adhere to it, is an unrenewed man, one who has not God as his Father and friend ; and hence a very improper guide for you and your children to follow. (1 Jno. 4 : 5.)

Such a professed teacher of Christianity may have mental acumen, various learning, pecuniary resources, distinguished reputation, oratorical skill, and many adherents, but he has not God, as his Father and friend, his teacher and portion. Miserable are they who live without God in the world, and adore a fable, a false Christ, a Christ that exists only in their own imagination !

The other reading (generally preferred by critical editors of the N. T.), *he who goeth before*, or in his own opinion progresseth, *and abideth not*, etc., amounts to the same thing. He abandons the Biblical doctrine concerning the Christ as obsolete, or at least obsolescent ; is a self-styled advanced thinker ; takes the lead in the interminable thicket of conflicting human opinions, and yet boasts of progress ; as if the prophets and apostles of Christ knew less of Him than one "puffed up by his fleshly mind," one who takes genius for inspiration, while he is a tool in the hands of Satan. (1 Jno. 4 : 3 ; Col. 2 : 18, 19.)

But *he that abideth in the doctrine of the Christ, the same hath both the Father and the Son* : has them as his friends and infallible guides. Cf. 1 Jno. 4 : 6.

Look to yourselves ; for otherwise ye will lose the benefit of our apostolic toils ; or, if not wholly so, you will not receive a full reward, when Christ again appears. Besides, the antichristian deceivers are men unenlightened and unrenewed, having no communion with the Father and the Son, the only infallible sources of truth, as we apostles and believers have.

The prohibition : *If any one cometh unto you* (the if with the indicative taking the fact for granted), *and bringeth not this doctrine*, the revealed doctrine concerning the Christ,

receive him not into the house, do not entertain him, neither bid him good speed, or wish him prosperity as a teacher.

Lit., *And say not joy to him.* Cf. Jas. 1 : 1, Gr. The usual salutation and hospitable reception are not due to an antichristian teacher. *To bring*, a doctrine is to bear it in the mind and utter it with the organs of speech. Cf. Jno. 18 : 29 ; Acts 25 : 7 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 11.

The prohibition relates to deceivers only, those who do not confess the apostolic doctrine concerning the Christ, and yet claim to be teachers of Christianity. When such an emissary from the father of lies knocks at your door, do not entertain and welcome him in his assumed character as a minister of Christ.

The reason follows : *For he that biddeth him good speed shareth in his wicked deeds*, partakes of the sins of the false teacher, and is in part responsible for the evil consequences that result from the spread of his pernicious error. Cf. 1 Tim. 5 : 22.

There is no reference here to the benevolence due to men as men, or in want and distress, which our Lord portrays in the parable of the good Samaritan ; nor to persecutors, 1 Pet. 3 : 9, etc. ; nor to teachers in their dealing with enemies of the gospel, 2 Tim. 2 : 25, 26 ; Tit. 1 : 13 ; but to private Christians, forbidding them to give the least encouragement to manifest deceivers.

True Christian love has well-defined limits. It is love on account of the truth abiding in our brethren, vs. 1-3. But he who abideth not in the doctrine concerning the Christ, is not in Christ. A bigot in error can not be a child of the truth, or truly esteem the lovers of it ; and no Christian is required to love as a brother him who is an antichristian teacher.

To propagate our own speculations concerning Christ (His person and work, and that whether relating to His first or second advent, or to both), is emphatically a wicked deed ; for it undermines the foundations of revealed truth, presupposing that God has testified falsely concerning His Son,

and it substitutes for the Testimony of God the dreams and conjectures of fallible men, who lead others as well as themselves far away from truth and holiness and salvation. Even if an angel from heaven could contradict the Biblical doctrine concerning Christ, there hangs over his head the apostolical anathema. Gal. 1 : 8, 9 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 22.

5. A B K L S sah vg writing (pres. part.).

7. K L as c. t., A B S vg went forth. Some explain the connection between this and the next verse thus : *Because* many deceivers, etc., *look to yourselves*, etc. But this supposes that the last clause of v. 7 is an explanatory parenthesis ; which is not certain.

8. K L as c. t., A S vg cop Irenæus that ye lose not what ye have wrought, but receive a full reward. Irenæus seems also to have read *autous*, or else cites from memory (3. 16. 8.). B sah that ye lose not what we have wrought, but (that) ye receive a full reward : which seems preferable, for the c. t. takes off the sharp edge of the exhortation ; and this reading happily accounts for the other diversities (mater lectionis).

9. A B S sah goeth before (or forward) *proagon*, K L as c. t. A B S sah vg omit of the Christ after 2d doctrine : B K L S cop sah vg both the Father and the Son, A both the Son and the Father. (1 Jno. 2 : 24.)

Who confess not Jesus Christ *coming in flesh* : v. 7. To say that *erchomenon* is=qui veniebat, as Bengel does, is untenable ; for in 3 Jno. 3, the time of the participle is determined by the preceding verb. And it further supposes that John uses the aorist and present participles indiscriminately, while the contrary is evident, as before shown. A similar objection applies to Beza's *venisse*. The translation must be as above, or thus : *Who confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in flesh*. (Rev. 22 : 20.)

¹² Having many things to write unto you, I would not *write* with paper and ink : but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. ¹³ The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

The Postscript, in which the apostle accounts for the brevity of his letter, and sends a salutation from the children of Cyria's sister. *I hope to come unto you, and speak the many things I desire to say mouth to mouth*, in the plainest and most friendly manner, or with the unreserved discourse that is becoming the lovers of Christ (Num. 12 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 13 : 12), *in order that our joy may be full* : lit., may

be fulfilled — *i.e.*, filled full; as in 1 Jno. 1:4; Jno. 15:11; 16:24. It seems that Cyria's elect sister was not at home when John wrote this epistle, and hence her children alone send their Christian salutations; and that this sister and her children resided at the place where this epistle was written.

Our joy as believers need not and should not be lessened by the wickedness of antichristian deceivers. And if we do not countenance them as teachers, it will not.

What do we speak of with our brethren in the house, and by the way? Many things indeed, but what things? Lk. 24:17; Col. 3:16; Eph. 4:29. Is the doctrine of Christ the most delightful topic of our conversation? Do we speak of His first advent and the great ends accomplished by it, but pass by the second advent and the great ends that are foretold to be effected thereby? If the former should excite our faith, love, and holy obedience, as is unquestionable, ought not the latter to be the great object of our hope? If the Theanthropos never comes again, what will become of the dead in Christ? Can there be a resurrection till He appears? And what will be the condition of mankind if Jesus Christ does not come to banish Satan and all the incorrigible from the world, and to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh? Let the history of the Christian church for nearly two thousand years answer.

12. B vg having, A S I have; B K L S sah but I hope, A vg cop for I hope; A B S *genesthai*, K L *ellthein*; K L S our joy, A B cop vg your joy.

13. K L amen, A B S cop sah vg omit.

Amen at the conclusion of the Epistles (like the subscriptions to the same), when the sacred writers pray for others, is an addition of transcribers, indicative of the response or consent of the hearers; 1 Cor. 14:16; *e.g.* 1 Thes. 5:28; 2 Cor. 13:14. But the amen is genuine at the conclusion and elsewhere in the epistles, when the writers give vent for themselves to their own holy affections; *e.g.* 2 Pet. 3:18; Gal. 1:5; Rom. 9:5.

Paper, v. 12, *chartes*, made from the papyrus. In the third epistle, the apostle refers also to the sharp-pointed split *reed* or pen. (See Hug's interesting remarks, Int. N. T., chap. 3; Fausset in loc.; Adam's Rom. Ant.)

THE
THIRD EPISTLE
OF
JOHN.

COMMENTARY.

¹ The elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

Well-beloved and beloved are translations of the same word = *beloved*. *Whom I* (the emphatic pronoun, as in 2 Jno. 1, whatever may be said of such men as Diotrephes) *love in truth*, with Christian sincerity ; expressing with my pen no hollow-hearted, meaningless compliment. The repetition of *beloved* here and in the following context shows the fervor of his Christian love.

² Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. ³ For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. ⁴ I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

In all things I pray that thou mayest prosper, etc. (or, *Considering all things*). The prayer or desire of my heart is that in all respects your temporal prosperity, and particularly your health, may correspond with the prosperity of your soul. What a commendation to drop from the pen of the holy and venerable apostle ! Gaius, like Timothy, might have been subject to frequent sicknesses, 1 Tim. 5 : 22, his holy soul dwelling in a feeble body ; and he was, probably, hindered in his business by the opposition of selfish tradesmen, although a man of considerable pecuniary resources, vs. 5-8. He seems also to have been distressed by the turbulent despotism of Diotrephes, who, perhaps, was an

officer in the church of which Gaius was a member. Accordingly, the apostle, instead of the usual salutation, desires for him blessings suited to his peculiar circumstances, which is an unmistakable evidence of the genuineness of the letter.

How seldom do prayers ascend to God for our brethren who are rich in this world's goods as well as rich in faith, and who, from love to Christ, willingly and constantly labor for the spread of the gospel both at home and abroad ! Such men are Gaius-like, and our prayers for them should be like those of the apostle. Most certainly, such holy liberality demands a grateful recognition before the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

I am persuaded that thy soul prospereth. *For I rejoiced greatly, when brethren came and testified to thy truth*, thy truthfulness or Christian sincerity, *how thou walkest in truth* ; how the sincerity of thy heart is shown by thy life, thy whole method of speaking and acting. (This Christian sincerity and consistency arise from the soul's being pervaded by the truth. Notes on 2 Jno. 1, 2.) *Thou*, being expressed in the original is emphatic ; how *thou*, in the midst of the wavering and disturbance caused by Diotrephes, *walkest in truth* ; not lying prostrate in sinful impotence or yielding to despotic authority, but going on in Christian sincerity. (These familiar letters are very interesting and important because of the inside view they give us of some of the churches planted by the apostles ; then, as now, there were heretics and ecclesiastical tyrants seeking to promote their selfish ends by sanctimonious pretexts.) I rejoiced so much on this account that it has induced me to send you this epistle, as a testimony of my love as a Christian, and of my approbation as an apostle.

The same thought amplified : *I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in truth*. Joy, by metonymy, for the incidental cause or occasion of it.

When we walk in simplicity and godly sincerity, our single aim being to please God and Christ, and that amidst

all the opposition proceeding from the duplicity and selfish ambition of professed disciples, then the soul prospers and is in health. Cf. 2 Cor. 1 : 12 ; Jas. 1 : 8. But he who seeks to promote his own glory and authority more than that of Christ has a sickly soul, and, if God's grace prevent it not, he will pine away, and know by bitter experience what is meant by the second death. Phil. 3 : 18, 19.

What is the occasion of our chief joy as officers or members of the church? Do we exult in seeing or hearing that our fellow-disciples walk in sincerity and consistency ; that they behave as scholars in the school of Christ? Or does it depend on the fact that we are associated with the learned, rich, and fashionable?

2. *Peri panton euchomai*, etc., Lit. Concerning all things I pray, etc.; *peri* with gen : strictly *all around*, hence about or concerning all things, or in all respects ; which we connect with the infinitives that follow : I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper, and be in health. Others connect *peri panton* with *euchomai*, and make the former expression = above all things, or more than all things ; which can hardly be justified by appealing to the usage of Homer and Pindar, or be held as in accordance with the spirit of the beloved disciple. And there is no grammatical necessity of construing *peri panton* with *euchomai*. (Winer, Sect. 47.)

Another interpretation, however, is possible, and amounts to the same as the first. *Peri panton* may be taken absolutely at the beginning of a sentence, and afterward further elucidated, as in 1 Cor. 8 : 1, 4. I, looking around at all things (putting myself in your place, and from that point of view considering all things that are adapted to your circumstances), pray for the continuance of your wealth and health.

3. S I rejoiced, B for I rejoiced. The time of the participles is determined by the preceding verb. "The truth that is in thee," is a paraphrastic explanation, not a translation.

Kathos with verbs of narration is = how, as in Acts 15 : 14. By rendering "even as" an English reader may be led to suppose that John is adding his own testimony, whereas he speaks only of the testimony of brethren who came to him. (Lillie.)

4. A B C in the truth, K L Thph Oec in truth.

Charin (favor) instead of *charan* (joy) is an evident mistake, although found in B cop vg. The double comparative *meizoteran* is used for the sake of euphony, as with us "the lesser Asia." The plural *touton* is

either used emphatically by a Hebraism, or it refers to the sources of joy stated, v. 3, viz., the visit of the brethren, and their testimony to thy Christian sincerity.

Even if *hina* be taken here as a complement of the demonstrative pronoun, the telic force of the particle is not wholly lost, which may be thus illustrated: To hear of such conduct, that is the greatest joy of my heart; my Christian love aims at the attainment of such good news.

⁶ Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; ⁶ which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: ⁷ because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. ⁸ We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth.

Having stated the occasion which led him to write, the apostle now enters on his main design, which is to exhort Gaius to perseverance in Christian love, and especially to missionaries. In furtherance of this end, there is, besides exhortations, a commendation both of Gaius and Demetrius, and a pungent rebuke of Diotrephes. 5-12.

Beloved, thou actest faithfully, as becomes a believer, in whatever thou doest (in all your works of faith and labors of love) for the brethren, in general, and for the strangers, in particular, who testified to thy love before the church, in the presence of Christians publicly assembled; whom if thou send forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God thou shalt do well.

Who refers to *the strangers*, commended to Gaius by other disciples. Acts 18:27; 2 Cor. 3:1. The testimony was probably given before the church at Ephesus, or wherever the apostle then was. These strangers, while relating the results of their labors among the Gentiles, could not but testify how the love of Gaius was shown to them. Herein, says the apostle, thou actest as a believer; and now, since they are about to visit you on their return to their fields of labor, help them forward in such a manner as will be to the glory of God, and meet with His approbation. (Col. 1:10;

1 Thes. 2 : 12.) *To send forward*, not simply to accompany for a short distance for the sake of honor, as in Acts 20 : 38 ; 21 : 5, but to aid one in a journey for the spread of the gospel ; as in Tit. 3 : 13 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 6. *To do well* is to discharge a Christian duty. Cf. 2 Pet. 1 : 19.

For in behalf of the Name they went forth, taking nothing from the Gentiles. Such love to Christ and generosity to men demand a corresponding love and liberality from you. *The Name*, by metonymy, for the Person as revealed ; the Son of God, Jesus Christ. 1 Jno. 3 : 23 ; 5 : 13 ; Jas. 2 : 7. To refer it to God, v. 6, is not necessary, since sudden transitions from the Father to the Son are altogether after the manner of John. *In behalf of the Name*, for the sake of promoting His glory, and from supreme love to Him, which is the right motive in all evangelistic labors, properly so called ; not ministerial reputation, denominational extension, civilization, science, or learning. The complicated result is one thing, the right motive another. Cf. Rom. 1 : 5, Gr.

We being expressed in the original is emphatic. *We* (who live in cities and towns where churches have long been planted) *therefore* (because of the generous spirit of the missionaries and their regard to the Name) *ought to receive such* (kindly entertain them during their intervals of rest), *in order that we may become fellow-laborers for the truth*, or co-workers in propagating the gospel. (Oec Thph take *apolambanein* as = *hupodechestai*.)

Apolambanein, to take from, or receive, is generally used with respect to a gift or proper recompense, as in Gal. 4 : 5 ; 2 Jno. 8. Only here, and Lk. 15 : 27, in reference to the loving reception of a person. In Luke, l. c., it does not mean simply to entertain as a guest, but to regain, take from the hand of death ; and here it is equivalent to *take away from* an unsympathizing crowd (Mk. 7 : 33), *receive* as unselfish ministers of Christ, which can not be done without practical proofs of Christian affection.

But the other reading, now generally approved, is *hupo-*

lambanein = to take hold of under—*i.e.*, take up, uphold ; and, metaphorically as here, to support or sustain : We ought to *take up* those who *take nothing* from the Gentiles.

It is our duty as Christians to support such preachers of the gospel, whether at home or in far-off lands. And if we have any regard to the Name which is above every name, we do and will, all objections to the contrary notwithstanding. He is a strange soldier of Christ who never looks to or regards His marching orders. Mat. 28 : 19, 20. (Cf. Phil. 1 : 5, 27.) And now, while God is opening the nations for the introduction of the truth, is it a time to hold back our contributions and restrain our prayers ? Is it a time for the younger disciples of Christ to ignore the question, What is our duty ? To obtain wealth and worldly renown, or to preach Christ to those who sit in darkness ?

5. K L Thph Oec and to the strangers as c. t., A B C S cop sah and that (*kai touto*) strangers—*i.e.*, even when strangers ; vg (et hoc in peregrinos) and this to strangers. But the relative clause that follows shows that well-known persons are alluded to ; which is in favor of the c. t. And to the strangers, *who testified to thy love*, v. 6. Cf. v. 10, the brethren.

6. Before the church, *enopion ecclesias* : well-known objects are often, both in Greek and English, without the article ; as in Town, in Court, and, as here, in open congregation. Lit. *Whom, having sent forward worthily of God thou shalt do well*, the doing well in the case depending on the help given for the onward journey ; *propemphas*, with the verb in the future tense, referring to a presupposed obligatory action conceived of as past : after thou hast sent them forward, thou shalt do well.

7. A B C K L S cop sah Thph Oec the name, vg his name : A B C S cop *ton ethnikon* (cf. Mat. 6 : 7, 18 : 17), (C without the article), K L vg (a Gentibus) sah Thph Oec *ton ethnon* ; but either way the sense is, They took nothing from those Gentiles (whether recently converted or not) to whom they preached. *They went forth—i.e.*, from home, friends, and evangelized communities. It was a voluntary act on their part ; they were not chased out, as Paul speaks, 1 Thes. 2 : 15. Persecution sometimes leads to the furtherance of the gospel, while they who are driven from home against their will make known Christ among the people to whom they come with right good-will. Acts. 8 : 4, etc. But John speaks of a deliberate self-chosen exodus from home and Christian society, as in Acts 15 : 40.

8. A B C S vg sustain, *hupolambanein*, K L Thph Oec receive *apolambanein*. The former reading seems to us genuine; for it has the weightiest authorities in its favor. It also agrees well with what precedes, vs. 5-7, and carries forward the exhortation in an energetic manner, while the other reading weakens the sense.

For the truth, dat. com. Not with the truth, but with the missionaries for the promotion of it. A S *ecclesia*, instead of *aletheia* as B C vg (veritatis) with c. t., which is unquestionably genuine. (Perhaps the former reading originated inadvertently from *ecclesia* in v. 9.)

⁹ I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.
¹⁰ Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church.

¹¹ Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

¹² Demetrius hath good report of all *men*, and of the truth itself; yea, and we *also* bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

Diotrephes portrayed and forewarned: *I wrote to the church*—probably the church of which Gaius was a member, and Diotrephes a presbyter. What the apostle wrote is not stated, but from the preceding context, it is likely that it was an epistle commending certain missionaries, and urging that church to help them worthily of God. *But Diotrephes, who loveth to be first among them*, who desires and attempts to lord it over the Christians composing the church, *doth not receive us*—i.e., as one of Christ's apostles. Cf. 1 Jno. 1:3; 4:14. *Us*, by metonymy, the author for the writing, doth not receive our admonitions, and so pays no attention to our apostolical authority. Cf. Jno. 5:46; Mat. 10:14, 40.

Therefore (since he receiveth us not), *if I come*, v. 14, *I will bring to remembrance his deeds which he doeth*, I will publicly reprove his disturbance of the peace and good order

of the church, by *prating against us with wicked words*, or in a light and trifling manner disparaging our person and our official authority ; *and not content therewith*, not satisfied with these exhibitions of his sin and folly, *neither does he himself receive the brethren*, regard and entertain the fore-mentioned missionaries, *and those that would he hindereth, and casteth out of the church*, or excommunicates. (*Hindereth*, cuts off, is = endeavors to lessen or wholly prevent their liberality to these brethren.

In the person of Diotrephes we have a portrait of an ecclesiastical tyrant, the despot of a parish. Such an one shows his unholy ambition as follows : (1.) He disregards even apostolical authority, when it stands in the way of his own promotion, thus pouring contempt on Christ Himself. (2.) He is not choice as to the means of self-elevation, babbling often with wicked words ; either originating or giving currency to slanderous imputations, to break down a rival or superior. (3.) He is not content with so employing his tongue or pen in the service of Satan, but proceeds to violent and arbitrary deeds, to the extent of his influence and power ; and that by a rude and insolent treatment of his brethren in the ministry, and by a causeless and unfeeling exercise of church discipline toward those Christians who oppose his tyranny, to say nothing of other methods ; and all to make himself the pope of a particular congregation. (1 Pet. 5 : 3.)

How Diotrephes prated against the apostle with wicked words, or what were the particular forms of his malignity, can only be conjectured. Eminent men have suggested the following explanations : (1.) He may have represented John as being in his dotage, and dilated on the impropriety of heeding missives from an apostle incompetent to act as such : Bickersteth. (2.) He may have perverted the prohibition in 2 Jno. 10, 11, under the pretext that the strangers sent and recommended to be aided as missionaries were impostors or false teachers : Lücke. (3.) He may also have discoursed on the divine institution of the pastoral office, and even had

the effrontery to maintain that "the Presbyter" had no right to interpose with his authority in the charge of another presbyter; or, that his congregation was independent of apostolical control, and that by divine right: Barnes; although he speaks doubtfully. (4.) We would modestly suggest that Diotrephes may have claimed to be a prophet-presbyter; or, that he was inspired as well as the apostle (1 Jno. 4: 1), and that revelations from the spirit of God had reference not only to doctrine, but also to government; that prophets stood next to apostles (Eph. 4: 11; 1 Cor. 12: 28), and on the same platform with old and decrepit apostles, and hence that he as a prophet or inspired teacher of a Christian church ought to be implicitly obeyed.

But whatever may be thought of these and similar explanations of the mode in which he endeavored to cloak his wickedness, here there stands before us a selfish and ambitious minister, disturbing the peace, good order, and liberality of a Christian congregation; and we see the unmistakable marks of the apostle's disapprobation branded on his forehead.

Now, what must be said of those ministers who strive to confine all contributions within the narrow domain of their own parishes, or who hinder by word and deed the promotion of the truth in this and other lands? Are they successors of the apostles, or of Diotrephes?

If any think it strange that men professing to be teachers of Christianity did then resist and reject the authority of apostles, they should recollect what is written in the first epistle of John, and by Paul in his epistles to the Galatians, Corinthians, to Timothy and Titus; and they should especially recollect that the mystery of iniquity, particularly in the form of an apparently pious but truly Satanic ambition, was at work, even when the second of the Pauline epistles was written (2 Thes. 2) about twenty years after the ascension of our Lord.

Beloved, do not imitate that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God; he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

What a sudden and delightful transition from pungent reproof to mild and loving entreaty ! And this exhortation to Gaius shows that it is not needless to stimulate to perseverance the holiest disciples, even those whose souls prosper, who walk in truth and love, and who cheerfully and constantly aid in the propagation of the gospel.

Imitate not the evil, but the good. The expressions are general, but, when considered in the light of the preceding context, the sense is : Avoid all unholy ambition and illiberality, but persevere in the cultivation of moral goodness, an essential constituent of which is love to the brethren, and especially to disinterested ministers of the gospel.

The motive : *He that doeth good* = he that doeth righteousness, 1 Jno. 3 : 10, or he that loveth his brother, *is of God* ; is a child of God by regeneration. 1 Jno. 2 : 29 ; 4 : 4. *He that doeth evil*, hates or maltreats his brother, 1 Jno. 3 : 10-18, *hath not seen God*. "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all." And *to see* God is a metaphor = to discern and delight in His holiness. None but the pure in heart can see God, in this world or in that which is to come. Ps. 30 : 4 ; Mat. 5 : 8.

An unrenewed person may have a momentary pleasure in a great variety of things. He may feel a pleasant awe on lofty mountains, amid the great deep, or in pathless deserts. He may admire the beauty of a painting, enjoy the reading of a poem, be moved greatly and pleasantly by the eloquence of an able orator ; he may exult in the happy results of his patriotic labors, or take a calmer rest among his family and friends ; but one thing he lacks, one thing he does not perceive and enjoy, and that is the unspeakable beauty of God.

And it is self-evident that he who domineers over his brethren has never seen God. He may indeed be a learned and scientific theologian, he may have executive ability and force of will, or great tenacity of purpose in exalting himself ; but he is blind to the holiness, which is the beauty, of God.

To Demetrius testimony hath been borne by all, and by the truth itself (a personification), *but we also testify, and ye know* (Gaius and his friends) *that our testimony is true.* (Jno. 21 : 24.)

Of Demetrius nothing further is known. He may have been the bearer of the letter, but (judging from the commendations) he seems to have been unknown to Gaius. Perhaps, he was a presbyter, or local pastor, distinguished for his humility, love, and liberality, or the exact opposite of Diotrephes. But whether an officer or private member of a Christian church, the testimony, viewed in the light of the preceding context, must have had a special reference to these graces of the Spirit.

The testimony then is : All his associates, or parishioners, unhesitatingly admit him to be humble, loving, and liberal. The truth itself, by its effects on his disposition and life, stands forth as a witness in his favor, which the apostle confirms by his own unimpeachable testimony.

What an honor to be commended by such an apostle as John ! What then will it be to be commended by Christ Himself ! If you truly desire it, never falter in the path of truth and love. (Notes on 1 Pet. 1 : 7.)

9. K L Oec Thph I wrote, A B C S cop sah I wrote something. But it is self-evident that if he wrote at all, he must have written something ; and such indefinite, unmeaning expressions are not in the style of John. Besides, what he wrote is sufficiently implied, and need not be misunderstood, if compared with vs. 5-8. The letter indeed is not extant, and it was needless to give directions for its preservation, since we have the substance of it in the verses referred to. The reading of the Vulgate (*scripsissem fortisan*, apparently = *egrapsa an*), I would have written, does not mend the matter, as it is clear from what follows that John had no dread of the lawless despot. Besides, this reading is poorly supported. Jerome, *scripsi etiam*.

Some hold that Diotrephes was simply an ambitious, self-willed member of the church, but it is not easy to see how he could excommunicate any, if not a presbyter ; for to cast out of the church does not mean to drive from among assembled disciples or banish from a city, but to excommunicate.

10. A B C K L *bouloumenous*, sah vg *epidechomenous*. *I will bring to remembrance.* Cf. 1 Tim. 5 : 20.

11. A B C K S sah vg omit 2d but, L cop have it.

12. K L ye know, A B C S cop sah vg thou knowest. As to *kai—de*, see on 2 Pet. 1 : 5 ; 1 Jno. 1 : 3. Bengel : *de, tamen*, etsi jam multis ornatus testimoniis sit Demetrius.

13 I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee ; 14 but I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face.

Peace *be* to thee. *Our* friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.

The postscript, in which, as in the second epistle, he excuses the brevity of the letter because of his speedy contemplated visit ; and sends salutations first from himself to Gaius, then from Christian friends at the place of writing, and finally from himself to friends where Gaius resided.

We may now, while visiting the friends of Christ, and by a frank and unreserved outpouring of the heart, enjoy a sweet earnest and foretaste of that communion of saints which will be experienced in the church triumphant.

What delightful meetings and greetings will take place at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints ! (1 Thes. 2 : 19, 20 ; 3 : 12, 13 ; 4 : 15-18 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 1.

“ O long-expected day, begin !

Dawn on these realms of woe and sin.”

14. Lit. But I hope straightway (a popular expression for very soon) to see thee, and we shall speak mouth to mouth. Peace (be) to thee. The friends greet thee. Greet the friends by name.

The friends—i.e., the friends of Christ, an allusion to the Saviour's words. Jno. 15 : 12-15. *By name—i.e.*, severally, just as if their names were fully written. (Bengel.)

In v. 13, A B C S cop sah have *grapsai soi*, K L *graphein* as c. t. ; for the 2d to write A B C have *graphein*, K L as c. t. *grapsai*. The c. t. may be thus explained : I had it in my power to write many things = I could write much, but I will not with ink and pen at once write (many things) unto thee. 14 v. I hope, however, etc. The other reading, thus : I could at once write many things to thee, but my present desire and intention is not to express them in that manner. Both readings present the same thought, but in a slightly different light and shade.

THE
EPISTLE
OF
JUDE.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

I. *The author of the epistle.* He describes himself thus : Lit. *Judas a servant (bondman) of Jesus Christ, and (or but) a brother of James.*

Judas is the Greek for the Hebrew *Judah*. *A servant of Jesus Christ*, is used to describe his office, as in Jas. 1 : 1. But the phrase is ambiguous. It may denote an apostle of Christ, Rev. 1 : 1, or it may not, Col. 4 : 12 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 24. It is a general term designating the ministers of Christ, Phil. 1 : 1, and cannot of itself denote the apostolic office. An apostle may so call himself, but a general designation is not a specific term. (When private Christians are intended, the word is generally in the plural, as in 1 Pet. 2 : 16 ; Rev. 2 : 20.)

The expression, *a brother of James*, does not remove the ambiguity ; for there were two apostles called James, the son of Zebedee (who soon became a martyr), and the son of Alphaeus. Lk. 6 : 14, 15 ; Acts 1 : 13. One of the brothers of the Lord had the same name. Mat. 13 : 55 ; Mk. 6 : 3.

There were also two apostles called *Judas* (or *Jude*), Judas Iscariot (a man of Kerioth), and “ *Judas not Iscariot.*” Jno. 14 : 22, with Josh. 15 : 25. One of our Lord’s brothers was also called Judas, or Jude. Mat. 13 : 55 ; Mk. 6 : 3.

But is there no way of removing the ambiguity contained in this description of himself ? We think there is. That Jude, one of the brothers of our Lord, and not the apostle Jude, is the author of the epistle, may be thus shown.

(1.) Jude clearly and pointedly distinguishes himself from the apostles, 17, 18. "But as for you, beloved, be mindful of the words which have been spoken before *by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ*; for *they said* to you," etc.; which is a plain allusion to, or rather citation of, 2 Pet. 3:2, 3, for the writer does not say, Previously spoken by us the apostles, but by the apostles, thus distinguishing himself as not an apostle. (2.) Judas (or Jude the apostle), not Iscariot, according to the earliest and best testimony in the matter, was *the son of James*, not his brother. So it appears in the ancient Syriac version. Lk. 6:16; Acts 1:13.

But if not an apostle he was a prophet or inspired writer of the apostolic church, like Mark and Luke; or an evangelist of the same church—*i.e.*, an inspired missionary, an assistant or deputy-apostle, like Timothy and Titus. In either case he had good reason to describe himself as "A Servant of Jesus Christ."

As to the brothers of our Lord men have always differed. Some say they were cousins, called brothers by an alleged Hebraism. But it will be difficult to prove that the term brother is used in the N. T. in the wide signification of the corresponding Hebrew word. And if this had been the meaning intended by the sacred writers they would have written *anepsioi*, as Paul does. Col. 4:10. But this word never occurs: they are always called brothers of Jesus.

Others hold them to have been half-brothers, or sons of Joseph by a former wife. But these are mere conjectures, originating from the false and unscriptural assumption that virginity is a holier state than matrimony, and were devised to uphold the dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary, the mother of Jesus, which is contradicted by the plain meaning of Mat. 1:25.

We agree with those who think they were younger sons of Joseph and Mary. This is the only obvious and natural interpretation, as will abundantly appear by examining all the texts in which they are mentioned, not the least hint being anywhere given that they were not brothers in the

strict sense ; *e.g.*, Mk. 6 : 3. " Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon ? And are not his sisters here with us ? "

In our judgment, none of the brothers of our Lord were apostles. Not before His resurrection, for then they did not believe in Him ; not after it, for then they are distinguished or excluded from the number of the apostles. Jno. 7 : 5 ; Acts 1 : 14 ; 1 Cor. 9 : 5. It seems, then, that they were converted after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, when they became prophets and evangelists. 1 Cor. 9 : 5. And two of them, as we hold, were authors, from each of whom we have one of the catholic epistles, the epistle of James, residing at Jerusalem, and that of Jude, his brother.

II. *The Genuineness of the Epistle.* That it was written by Jude, the brother of James, an inspired writer of the apostolic church, is attested by the author of what is called the Muratorian Canon, by Tertullian, by Clement of Alexandria, by Hippolytus (*De Consum.* 10), and by Origen in his comments on Matthew. And the internal evidence is wholly in favor of its genuineness, there being nothing in it unworthy of an inspired writer.

But it is objected that the writer alludes to and cites apocryphal books, 9 : 14, 15. If so, where is the impropriety of disarming the enemies of the gospel with the weapons furnished by themselves ? How can that be unbecoming any sacred writer ?

The similarity between this epistle and the second chapter of Peter's second epistle is very striking, and has been a stumbling block to many. How is it to be accounted for ? The principal hypotheses are the following : (1.) Peter made use of Jude's epistle. So Hug, Alford, and Gardiner. (2.) Both Peter and Jude borrowed from a common document, or drew from the same source in their own way : Sherlock, followed by Doddridge and Scott. This hypothesis, although ingenious, is a child of the imagination. And the first hypothesis is disproved by what follows. (3.) Jude made use of Peter's second epistle. So Œcumenius, Lu-

ther, Mill, Schaff, and Fausset. This supposition is, in our judgment, correct ; for Jude himself acknowledges as much by the way in which he cites 2 Pet. 3 : 2, 3, ascribing the words quoted to one of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is just as natural and becoming for a N. T. prophet to confirm what he says by appealing to an apostle, as it is for the apostles to cite the O. T. prophets for the same purpose. And if Jude wrote to converted Jews in the dispersion, nothing was more suitable than to quote copiously from the great apostle of the circumcision.

But it is seldom noticed that *the diversities in style are just as striking as the coincidences*, proving that Jude made use of and quoted Peter, not from poverty of thought, but for the reason already stated. Hence these peculiar expressions : “ Rocks in your love feasts ; blighted autumnal trees, unfruitful, twice dead, uprooted ; wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame ; wandering stars ; snatching them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.” These original, elegant, and powerful expressions show that Jude was an inspired orator, like his brother James, and that imagination was the dominant faculty in them both.

III. *As to the persons primarily addressed, and the place and date of the epistle*, nothing can be accurately settled, there being no hints in the epistle to guide us to a sure conclusion.

Huther supposes that it was intended for Jewish converts in the dispersion ; others, for the same class of persons in Palestine ; others, for those in Asia Minor : all so deciding because of Jude’s abundant allusions to the Old Testament. And others, arguing from the inscription, hold that it was a letter intended for Christians generally, without regard to residence or nation. The choice seems to lie between the first and last-named opinion. We prefer the first, not only for the general reason already alleged, but also because it is natural to suppose that Jude, like his brother James, would

have an earnest longing to promote the salvation of his brethren according to the flesh.

The most probable date of the epistle is after the death of Peter, or toward the close of the first century.

IV. *Contents.* 1. Inscription and salutation, with the occasion and design of the letter. 1-4. 2. Principal topics : The certainty and justice of the punishment of the vile perverters of the gospel ; of the eminently ungodly and immoral. 5-16. 3. Concluding exhortations, and doxology. 17-25.

COMMENTARY.

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called : ² mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied.

Lit. *Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, but a brother of James.* See the Introduction, and notes on Jas. 1 : 1. In the Adumbrations before referred to, the ancient writer says : “ Jude, who wrote a Catholic Epistle, a brother of the sons of Joseph, being very pious, although aware of his relationship to the Lord, yet did not call himself His brother, but preferred to say *Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ*—that is, of the Lord, *but a brother of James.*” (Cited by Gardiner, p. 20. Cf. Lillie and Mombert in loc.)

To the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ ; so the text appears in the most ancient manuscripts and versions. Jude writes to *the called* (*tois kletois*), and *kletois* is a verbal noun, further described by the intervening clauses, which contain perfect participles denoting permanency), *i.e.*, to the effectually called, or to those who professed to be so called. It is the language of Christian love, and the whole description shows the relations of the called to the Father and to Christ, and by implication to the Spirit. At regeneration God calls us through His Word to come out of darkness into His marvellous light, and we, by the direct efficiency of the Spirit in our hearts, listen to the call, or obey. 1 Pet. 2 : 9 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 14. And this obedience to the call is the consequence of God’s election, 1 Thes. 1 : 5 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 9 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 1–3, which is to be made sure to ourselves in the way described. 2 Pet. 1 : 5–10.

As to the motive, it is not at all to be found in us, but only in God. Hence Jude adds: To the called, *beloved in God the Father*; the fountain or source of the love shown us in effectual calling is in Him; in His own infinite and unspeakable love, not in ourselves. Cf. Rom. 1:7; 1 Thes. 1:4; 2 Thes. 2:13.

And kept for Jesus Christ, guarded in God's power through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, or at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 1:5, 6. Kept for Jesus Christ, as his betrothed, in order to stand at His side as His Bride or Queen, at the second advent, and to all eternity. Cf. 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:27; Rev. 19:7, 8; 20:6; 22:5; 21:2, etc. Kept for the honor of Christ, in the great day. 2 Thes. 1:10.

If the world hates the renewed, and scoffers deride, here are sources of consolation that can not be dried up by their malignity. There is love to the called in the heart of God the Father, and they are kept for Jesus Christ. What more can be desired?

Mercy to you, and peace, and love be multiplied. (Notes on 1 Pet. 1:2.) *Mercy* seems especially to refer to that of Jesus Christ; *love*, to that which exists in God to the called, v. 21; and *peace*, to all the blessedness thence resulting. May these benefits continue to be largely bestowed upon you, or be multiplied, both in this world and in that which is to come.

1. K L sanctified; A B S cop sah vg Origen Oec beloved, which is confirmed as genuine by "love" in the salutation, and by "keep yourselves in the love of God," 21. Also, by the fact that sanctification is denoted by the phrase, the called. But if any prefer to adhere to the common text, then "sanctified in God the Father" must mean set apart in His eternal purpose, which agrees in sense with the other reading. Preserved *in* Jesus Christ is an inaccurate translation, there being no preposition in the Greek. Kept *by* Jesus Christ (dative of the agent, as in Jas. 3:7), is possible, but not probable, here. It is the dative of advantage: kept *for* Jesus Christ; for His honor and glory. *Piscator*: In eum finem, ut aliquando Christo adducantur tanquam sponsa sponso. *Haenlein*: Cui fideles servati sunt. *Winer*: It is the dativus com-

modi : preserved for Jesus Christ. In like manner Fausset, Fronmüller, and Lillie.

But a brother of James, or, *And* a brother of James : *de* is an antithetical copula—*i.e.*, it connects by contrast, even when in our idiom we must render it by *and*, as in 2 Pet. 1 : 5-7.

³ Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. ⁴ For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The occasion and design of the epistle, as stated by Jude himself : 1. The scope or main design. *Beloved, while using all diligence to write unto you about the common salvation, I held it needful to write unto you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.*

It seems that Jude was desirous of writing concerning the common salvation, or the benefits of redemption as they pertain to all the renewed, and was diligent in arranging his affairs accordingly, but he felt constrained, or was urged by a sense of duty (for the reason stated in the fourth verse), to write forthwith or at once (*for this is the force of the aorist infinitive*), exhorting to an earnest striving for the maintenance and defence of the unadulterated gospel, which is his main design.

The faith, by metonymy, for the object of faith ; the truths revealed in Scripture, whether historic, didactic, preceptive, or predictive, and especially as stated and confirmed by Christ's apostles, as in ver. 20. Acts 6 : 7 ; Gal. 1 : 23 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 9 ; 4 : 1. The faith *delivered* ; taught orally and by writing, 2 Thes. 2 : 15, and that by apostles and prophets of that age, ver. 17. 2 Pet. 2 : 21 ; 3 : 2 ; Acts 13 : 1. Delivered *once for all*, or so accurately and perfectly as to need no bungling patchwork from uninspired men, to fill up imaginary deficiencies. (Col. 2 : 8.) Heb. 9 : 26, Gr. *To*

the saints, to the consecrated and sanctified, or the called before mentioned. As before the incarnation of our Lord the oracles of God were intrusted to the Israelites, a consecrated church and nation, so after it, the faith was once for all delivered to the saints, to Christians as such ; to all Christian churches, not to one church alone, nor to prelates alone.

The truths contained in Scripture constitute the faith once for all delivered to the saints ; and uninspired confessions of faith are valuable only so far as they state and defend these Biblical truths. But since men can hardly open the mouth or move the pen without expressing some probable opinion or assured belief, the outcry raised against church creeds is wholly irrational. Such creeds might indeed be abbreviated and otherwise amended ; but to insist on their entire abolition, is to affirm that the churches of Christ now existing have no right to state how they understand the principal topics of Scripture, as well as no right to examine the views of those who desire to be teachers or members. Bigots in error, it seems, wish to confine the systematic exhibition of belief to themselves.

The faith was delivered to the saints, not to be hidden from the people in unknown tongues, not simply to be extant in translations seldom studied and compared with the original languages, not simply to be esteemed as antique and venerable monuments of Hebrew and Greek literature, but to be held as a Revelation from God, by His own chosen servants, who spoke and wrote under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It is *the duty* of the called, who are beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ, not of ministers only, *to contend earnestly for the faith* so delivered ; to strive with all their might against those who abuse it, defending it when attacked by any of Satan's ministers, holding it forth in its purity and integrity, and transmitting it uncorrupted to posterity.

And in this sceptical age, how can private Christians of

disciplined intellect, and at home in physical science, better employ their talents than by defending wisely and well the gospel of the Redeemer, whom they love? And so of every branch of human learning that may be employed to throw discredit on the faith.

The warfare for revealed truth against Satanic error has, ever since the fall, been going on in our world; and there is no probability that the battle will be finished until Christ Himself comes to give the victory to "the called and chosen and faithful."

But *how* must the battle be fought? Not with abuse or vituperation, not by unfair and illogical stratagems: the truth needs no such helpers; not by calling the civil powers to become the executioners of a fanatical zeal; not by imprisonment, confiscation, and banishment; not by the rack or burning stake; not by refusing heretics, real or pretended, the common necessities of life—these abominable things have been done long enough by magistrates and clergymen, and as a so-called "act of faith," or offering to God! (Jno. 16: 2, Gr.) But they who pervert the gospel should be assaulted with unanswerable arguments from Holy Scripture, and so the incoherency and absurdity of their errors be thoroughly exposed. In this manner their credulity and folly will become manifest to others, and they themselves, if God give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, may get disentangled from the snares of the great deceiver. (2 Tim. 2: 25, 26.)

2. The occasion: Contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints; *for there are certain men crept in stealthily, who of old have been forewritten to this judgment, ungodly, transferring the grace of our God to lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.*

Certain men, or *some men*, whether few or many, for the phrase is indefinite. 1 Tim. 4: 1. (2 Jno. 7.) They *crept in stealthily* (a metaphor); slipped or glided in by the side of the saints, entered the church in a serpent-like manner;

or, they put on the dress of the saints, and so privily entered the house of God. (2 Cor. 11 : 13-15.)

Who of old have been forewritten to (or, *clearly described for*) *this judgment*, the judgment subsequently mentioned ; who long ago have been graphically described, painted in the clearest colors, or portrayed in the descriptions of the ancient prophets for this judgment. So Gal. 3 : 1, " Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was forewritten (set forth, portrayed) as crucified." *Judgment*, by metonymy, for punishment ; the sentence of the judge for its execution. Cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 3 ; Acts 24 : 25. In the metaphorical expression, *forewritten to this judgment*, there seems to be an allusion to the sentence of a judge publicly posted up and registered—a sentence first written and then hung up before the eyes of all. *Ungodly*, belonging to that class of men, or eminently irreverent. Cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 5, 6. The judgment spoken of pertains to them.

The translation preferred by some amounts to the same thing : *the ungodly of old forewritten to* (or, *clearly described for*) *this judgment*. Either way, the certainty and justice of their punishment are foretold ; the prophets of the ancient dispensation agreeing herein with the apostles and prophets of the apostolic church.

A further description of the ungodly : *transferring the grace of our God to lasciviousness*. To transfer is to carry over from one place to another, as in Acts 7 : 16 ; Heb. 11 : 5. And to put in an improper place ; hence metaphorically, as here, to pervert or abuse. What they pervert is *the grace of God*—i.e., the gospel, or the revelation of God's grace. (Notes on 1 Pet. 5 : 12.) They abuse it by *transferring it to lasciviousness*, they handle and move it as the means of promoting all kinds of sinful excesses, and especially the lawless indulgence of the bodily appetites. Cf. 2 Pet. 2 : 7 ; 18, Gr. (What the grace of God teaches, when rightly handled, is briefly stated, Tit. 2 : 11-14.) Jude says the *grace of our God*, from a consciousness of his effectual calling, and with a holy indignation that such un-

speakable love should be perverted to the vilest purposes, ver. 1. Phil. 3 : 18, 19.

And denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ, which seems to be the genuine text. *Master = Adonai—i.e.,* supreme owner and ruler. (Notes on 2 Pet. 2 : 1.) The participles are causal. The sense, then, is : Ungodly, inasmuch as they pervert the grace of God our Father, and refuse to acknowledge and obey Jesus Christ, our only Master and Jehovah. These impious men may be briefly designated as Humanitarian-Antinomian Libertines.

They who are unwilling to connect themselves with the church of Christ, because there are some ungodly men and wily hypocrites in it, would have had the same worthless excuse if they had lived in the days of the apostles, and will have it until Christ himself appears to separate the tares from the wheat. Mat. 13. He is our only Master and Lord, and we disobey Him at our peril. Lk. 19 : 27.

Contend earnestly for the faith ; for impious perverters of it have already crept into the church, and they are men who shall certainly and justly be punished, as is most clearly portrayed by the ancient prophets. In this manner the sacred writer introduces the principal topics of his epistle, and as motives to enforce the exhortation.

3. S our common salvation and life, also *graphein* twice ; A B sah our common salvation ; vg your common salvation ; K L cop the common salvation, as c. t. This verse presents us with a beautiful specimen of the way in which the Spirit incited the sacred writers to address the churches ; overruling their own desires, and causing them to see what was necessary in special emergencies. Herein God acted freely, and so did His chosen servants.

4. K L our only Master, God, and Lord ; A B C S cop sah vg Did Cyril our only Master and Lord, which must be held as genuine. *Despotes = Adonai*, is as much a peculiar name of the true God as Jehovah. Acts 4 : 24 ; Lk. 2 : 29 ; Rev. 6 : 10. And here it is applied to Christ, as is evident from 2 Pet. 2 : 1, and from the fact that God—*i.e.,* the Father, is mentioned in the words immediately preceding. Besides, *kurios* is = Jehovah. Cf. 1 Cor. 12 : 3 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 15. In Hebrew phrase, Our only Adonai and Jehovah, Jesus, Messiah : not to the ex-

clusion of the Father and the Spirit, but to the exclusion of all merely created intelligences. Col. 2 : 9, 10.

⁶ I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. ⁶ And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. ⁷ Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Principal Topics, 5-16. The *Certainty* and *Justice* of the punishment of those who abuse the grace of God to lasciviousness, and who refuse to obey our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ. Their certain and just punishment *is proved and illustrated* from what the Lord has done in the past, from what is foretold as to the future, and from the descriptions given of the character of those who had stealthily crept into the church of Christ.

The historical argument, derived from former examples of Divine retribution, is presented in the paragraph before us ; and it is upheld by an immovable foundation, the immutability of God ; his unchangeableness in truth, holiness, and justice. (Gen. 18 : 25.) 2 Pet. 2.

But (in opposition to these ungodly men, v. 4) *I wish to remind you, you who once for all know this*, although ye know accurately the historical facts that follow, and this statement of them is only for your admonition, *that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who believed not.*

The deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, viewed from the commission of Moses till the rebellion in the wilderness, was a bright picture of God's grace or favor to that people ; and the deliverance was attended and followed by a series of miracles of such a character as to furnish a demonstration that their Deliverer was the true God. The Lord even con-

descended to become their special Ruler as a church and nation, and gave them revelations for their guidance, having selected them in preference to all other nations as His *peculium* or special treasure, all out of pure undeserved grace, as Moses once and again emphatically testifies. So, in the first or earlier history of the people, He showed His grace.

But they abused the grace of our God ; for, when the spies returned and gave an account of what they had seen in Canaan, then the spirit of Egyptian slaves returned, and from the fire of unbelief burning in their hearts there burst forth in commingled flames the highest irreverence, the basest ingratitude, wild insubordination, and blasphemous rebellion. Num. 14. (Cf. 1 Cor. 10 ; Heb. 3 and 4.) Then *the Lord destroyed those who believed not*, Jude thus tracing up their sins to the source, or proximate cause, whence they originated. So, in the second signal incident of their history, *to deuteronomy*, He manifested the awfulness and reality of His justice.

He who first saved and afterward destroyed multitudes of the same church and nation was *the Lord—i.e.*, Jehovah, the Eternal Son, *the Logos asarkos*, who became incarnate, bought us with His blood, our only Master and Lord whom the impious perverters of the gospel deny. (Notes on 1 Pet. 3 : 19 ; cf. 1 Cor. 10 : 9.)

This example, then, is very much to the point in hand ; and it teaches us that nations and churches that abuse the grace of God, and obstinately refuse to obey the laws of Christ, will most certainly meet with signal punishment, even in the world as it now is ; and as individuals they can not escape the judgment of the great day.

Sacred History will be of little use to us, unless we take it up as a mirror in which to view the perfections of God, and of the God-man. And we should recollect that our own opinions, prejudices, and feelings cannot change the nature of the unchangeable God, nor of our Lord Jesus, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and who cannot deny

himself. If in this mirror we look only at the grace and turn away from beholding the justice, then we must be numbered with those who believe not ; and it will be too late to think of pardon and escape, when in prison with Antinomian Libertines. (1 Pet. 3 : 19, 20 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 5-9.)

The second example of our Lord's retributive justice : *Angels, too, that kept not their principality, but left their own habitation, for the judgment of the great day, with everlasting bonds under blackness hath he kept.* (Cf. notes on 2 Pet. 2 : 4.)

1. The persons that sinned : *Angels too* ; men not only sinned and were punished, but also intelligences of a higher rank in the scale of being.

2. The nature of their sin is discovered from the way in which they manifested it : *that kept not their principality*, etc.—*i.e.*, disregarded their obligations as princes or rulers. *Arche* (here only rendered “ first estate,” but in the margin “ principality”) means beginning, or firstness, in various aspects or relations, defined by adjuncts, as the beginning of the world, and of the gospel. Mat. 24 : 21 ; Phil. 4 : 15. Here it is equivalent to principality, firstness in some realm—*i.e.*, princely dominion, as in Lk. 20 : 20, Gr. And principality is used by metonymy for the duty inseparably connected with it, both as to subjects and realm,* which is evident from what follows : but left their own habitation. *Peter* says that they *sinned*, or kept not their primal holy condition, but *Jude* shows *how* it occurred ; by disregarding their duty as princes or rulers. That *kept not their principality* : watched not over it, acted not as guardians therein ; for this is the force of the metaphor.

But left their own habitation, voluntarily and without permission departed from the realm or world in which they had been appointed to rule. As princes their duty was to govern rightly its inhabitants, to guide them farther and farther in the path of truth and holiness, and so keep, guard, or protect them from evil ; and for a while they did so. But it

* Sept. Dan. 6 : 26. Xen. Anab. I. 1, 2.

seems that they became dissatisfied with the realm assigned them, refused to act any longer as princes in it, and so left it — traitors, deserters, and rebels. By thus abandoning their official station and habitation, they demonstrated that they had sinned ; that they had that insolent pride and unholy ambition which throws its possessor into hell. 1 Tim. 3 : 6.

By this sin fell the angels."

Many assume that *their own habitation* means Heaven, as used in the ordinary religious dialect, which opinion may be found in Milton's "Paradise Lost," but it cannot be proved from Scripture. All that is here declared amounts to this : It was a dwelling-place or *world adapted and assigned to* the angels as princes, and in which some of them sinned. (So Judas Iscariot went to his own place—the cell in Tartarus designed for and adapted to such a sinner as he. Acts 1.) But which of the celestial worlds it was, is not revealed.

3. Their punishment, present and future. *With everlasting bonds* (or, in perpetual chains, dative of manner, ever bound with the cords of their own sins) *under blackness*, the gloom peculiar to Tartarus, *hath he kept*. The same Lord who saved and afterward destroyed the people of Israel has kept, and still keeps, the rebel angels in the prison of the lost. They are like criminals constantly bound with chains in a dungeon where no light enters, and with no hope of pardon, since they are kept *for the judgment—i.e.*, the trial and condemnation, *of the great day*. Mat. 8 : 29 ; 25 : 41, 46 ; Jas. 2 : 19.

Now, if this is the condition, present and future, of the rebel angels, what will be the last state of those who pervert the grace of our God, and refuse to obey our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ ?

The third example, showing the certain and remediless punishment of the lawless and ungodly : (I wish to remind you, ver. 5) how Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner with these having given themselves

over to fornication, and gone away after other flesh, are set forth for an example of everlasting fire, suffering punishment. *How* (not *as*) ; since the particle is used with a verb introducing a narration. Cf. Mk. 12 : 26 ; Lk. 6 : 4 ; 3 Jno. v. 3. *In like manner with these*—*i.e.*, with the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. *The cities about them*, the towns with their inhabitants (especially the latter, by a common metonymy, since brick and clay can not be punished), Admah and Zeboim. Deut. 29 : 23 ; Hos. 11 : 8. The inhabitants of the four cities gave the reins to their abominable lusts ; sinned with a high hand against God and the laws of human nature. The participles seem to be causal = inasmuch as they gave themselves over, etc. “ This was the iniquity of Sodom : pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters ; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy ; and they were haughty and committed abomination before Me : therefore I took them away.” Ezek. 16 : 49, 50.

The order in the Greek is : *Are set forth for an example of everlasting fire punishment suffering* ; which we understand thus : *Are set forth for an example of everlasting fire, suffering punishment* ; or righteous retribution—*i.e.*, the manner in which the inhabitants of the four cities were destroyed is set forth in Scripture as a picture or symbol of the future everlasting punishment of the ungodly. (Mat. 25 : 41, 46.) The former inhabitants of those cities, now suffering righteous retribution in Hades or Tartarus, are, as to the manner of their overthrow, set forth in Scripture as a picture, specimen, or prophetic warning, of the sudden, dreadful, everlasting punishment that is to overtake the ungodly. (See other texts referred to on 2 Pet. 2.) So clearly is it revealed that the Lord is keeping the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment ; as Peter expresses it, 2 Ep. 2 : 9. (If we construe as in Eng. Vers., the sense remains the same.)

It thus appears that there is no hope for unholy disembodied spirits, no hope of their restoration to holiness and salvation, and no ground to expect their annihilation. And they who

now throw a thin veil over enormous crimes, calling fornication and infanticide the social evil, should ponder the awful words that fell from the lips of the Lord Christ, the Judge of all the earth. Mat. 11 : 20-24.

5. A omits 2 you, B (according to Mai) K L S have it. A B S all, *panta* (S is singular in omitting *hapax*), K L sah this, *touto* : K L S the Lord, A B vg cop sah Jesus.

6. *Angels* (without the article), the order of beings ; the clause *that kept not their principality*, etc., describes some of that order ; and the subjective negative intimates that it is not the writer's design to enter into further particulars concerning them. (Winer and Lillie.) *Desmois*, dat. of manner or instrument. *Hupo zophon* = *tartaros* in 2 Pet. 2 : 4.

7. S *hupechousin*, an evident mistake for *hupechousai*. In like manner with *these* : *toutois* refers to Sodom and Gomorrah by a constructio ad sensum. To refer it to angels is wholly untenable ; for, even if they have a subtle material body not ordinarily perceptible by men, there is no distinction of sex among angels. Lk. 20 : 34-36. An appeal to an ancient but preposterous interpretation of Gen. 6 : 2, does not mend the matter ; and it is strange that men like Alford still attempt to give currency to that senseless dream. Besides, such an interpretation contradicts Jude, who describes their first sin as pride or ambition, and states the manner in which they manifested it.

⁸ Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. ⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. ¹⁰ But these speak evil of those things which they know not : but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

An application of the examples adduced to the impious perverters of the gospel, who are like the cities of the Plain in lewdness, insolence, and lawlessness : *Yet, notwithstanding the awful instances of Divine retribution just recited, in like manner these dreamers also defile the flesh*, etc.

As teachers : *these dreamers* ; an elliptical metaphor = these who are dreamers. While men are dreaming, they take all sorts of fancies for realities ; so these dreamers hold

their abominable doctrines for oracles. Cf. Deut. 13 : 1-5 ; Jer. 23 : 25, etc. ; 1 Jno. 4 : 1, 3, 6.

Their conduct is regulated by their dreams, or pretended revelations. Hence they pollute the body, like those who dwelt in the cities which the Lord overthrew in His anger and in His wrath ; like the vile Gnostics of the second century, and their forerunners of the first ; like the so-called Spiritual Libertines of the sixteenth century, the free-lovers, Spiritualists, and Mormons of the present day—the self-styled Latter-Day Saints !

They also *despise dominion*, or *set aside lordship* ; treating with contempt any and every form of government which forbids the indulgence of their lawless passions ; and *revile glories*, or rail at dignities, speak with insolent irreverence of those invested with honor, who are appointed to make and execute wholesome laws : whose condemnation is just.

But Michael the archangel, etc. This is an evident allusion to a tradition, oral or written, held as authoritative by those against whom Jude writes ; and it is not necessary to suppose that he considered it as either true or false. It is a clever argumentum ad hominem. Neither is it necessary to maintain that the Spirit of truth enabled Jude to select this a real fact out of a mass of rubbish, inasmuch as it is difficult to see why an inspired writer may not occasionally employ the argument ad hominem, or reason with men on their own principles and from their own sources of evidence ; and especially with dreamers, or false prophets, who reject the genuine revelations recorded in Scripture (ver. 17).

The allusion is to a controversy between Michael and the devil about the body of Moses. How is it to be explained ? Which may be answered by asking, What need is there of any explanation of it ? Is not the end for which the allusion is made sufficiently obvious ? Here, says Jude in substance, is a story about the body of Moses the lawgiver, which you dreamers, who reject government and revile magistrates, hold to be true. If so, you are pungently reprovèd by it ; for Michael the archangel did not revile even the

devil ; nay more, he durst not deal, owing to his reverence for the Most High, in insolence or sarcasm, but simply said, The Lord rebuke thee ; thus leaving the retribution in the hands of Him to whom it belongs. *But these* (very different from Michael) *revile*, etc. This is the pith and point of the allusion, the end for which it was made—namely, to refute and rebuke the insolent and lawless on their own principles, and from their own sources of evidence.

That this is the right mode of considering the matter, appears also from the difficulties and inconsistencies that attend other attempted explanations, the explanations of those who assume the controversy to be a fact. (See the excellent commentary of Gardiner, and Poli Synopsis.)

If the Lord by angel-hands buried Moses (which we neither affirm nor deny), then the question arises, Why did the devil desire to have the place of his burial known ? And was the controversy concerning a grant or permission as to that matter ? Did Satan wish to have the body embalmed, or the relics preserved, in some conspicuous place, in order thus to tempt the Israelites to idolatry ? But who can believe that the great deceiver could suppose that a dead man's bones or a mummy would be an inducement *to them* so to sin ? (2 Ki. 23 : 16.) The adoration of *polluting* relics, universally so considered, could be no temptation to them, and Satan knew well that the worship of departed saints at that time and among that people could not be so introduced.

Or did the debate, as others suppose, relate to the resurrection of the body ? But if so, how could the devil or Michael know any thing about that except it had been revealed ? And what need then would there have been to dispute about a matter which neither of them could have prevented ? Moses, indeed, as well as Elijah, was seen at the Transfiguration of our Lord. But if a body had been prepared for the occasion, he would have appeared in glory or brightness ; and this is the most probable supposition, since his death and burial are expressly mentioned. If the

Lord raised him from the dead, why is not *that* also recorded? Rabbinic tradition indeed affirms it, but not Holy Scripture. The translation of Enoch and Elijah are also recorded by inspired writers; and if the resurrection of Moses actually occurred, the absolute silence of God's prophets about it is inexplicable. We hold it to be a pure Rabbinic fable, and "baseless as the fabric of a vision" (Deut. 34 : 5, 6).

But these revile whatever they know not, they speak irreverently of the grace of our God, of the supreme authority of Christ, of all divinely appointed rulers, and of all things truly holy and spiritual, their ignorance and insolence being equally conspicuous; *but whatever they naturally, as the irrational animals, understand, in these they corrupt themselves*: destroy themselves, or ruin their moral nature by instinctive brute-like indulgences. (Notes on 2 Pet. 2 : 10-12.)

Rational brutes who try to tear out the eye of conscience, and give the helm to instinct and appetite, who do not and will not govern themselves as becomes men, are ignorant indeed. Yet these are the men who speak insolently and irreverently of all authority in heaven and on earth. But unless they repent, at the judgment of the great day, not only Christ, but their own awakened reason and conscience will condemn them: and so also will it be in the prison of the disembodied, when with others as godless as themselves. How awful will it be to find their whole past life a senseless dream, and a miserable eternity an unmistakable reality! And to feel in the depths of the soul the justice of their punishment, while they ever moan and say, We have ruined ourselves (ver. 11).

8. *Mentoi* is here adversative = yet, however, or nevertheless, as in Jno. 4 : 27; 20 : 5, not concessive as in Jas. 2 : 8. *These dreamers*: cf. Acts 2 : 17. *Filthy* is a needless addition to the text, and inaccurate, leading the English reader to suppose that the allusion is to literal dreamers, whereas *dreamers* mean, as above said, false prophets or teachers; which is a metaphor often so used in Scripture.

9. This verse is not parallel with 2 Pet. 2 : 11. Peter speaks of angels

in general, Jude of Michael the archangel ; Peter of angels when they appear before the Lord, Jude, of Michael and the devil in debate on earth ; and in Peter's text no one, with his wits about him, can drag in *the body of Moses*.

And they who formerly supposed that there is in that phrase an allusion to Zech. 3 : 1-5, looked through the spectacles of Origen, or had their eyes dimmed by his Platonic, wrongly called, spiritualizing mode of interpretation ; imagining that the corpse of Moses was a symbol of God's ancient church, or of the ceremonial law ! As if, too, the words, " The Lord rebuke thee," could not be quoted by an apocryphal writer, and in a wholly different connection and subject from that in which they are found in the prophet !

" Woe unto them ! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

A prediction of the punishment of the ungodly, the justice of which is shown from a further description of their character : *Woe unto them !* Woe belongs to them ; or, Woe shall be their portion--*i.e.*, their just and proper recompense, for in disposition and habits they resemble Cain, Balaam, and Korah.

In vs. 11-13, *Jude appears as a prophet of the apostolic church, himself predicting by the Spirit of Christ the just doom of the incorrigible*. And this prediction is a sublime and awful specimen of the manner in which such prophets spoke and wrote, when depicting the just punishment reserved for ungodly and vile sinners. He paints their sins by brief allusions to some of the tallest men in Satan's army, and by matchless tropes, falling thick and fast as snow-flakes from a cloud ; and yet with all that holy sadness which adorns a spokesman of Jesus Christ.

For *woe unto them*, is a peculiar prophetic phrase, indicating both a dislike for their sins and a lamentation over their ruin. Cf. Mat. 11 : 21 ; 23 : 13, etc. Jude, too (as often with the ancient prophets, *e.g.*, Ps. 36 : 12), here speaks of what is future as past. As if the great day had come, as if standing by the side of our only Master and Lord Jesus

Christ, Jude, as his prophetic eye sees them falling into the abyss, exclaims : Woe belongs to them, it is their just due, for when on earth they walked in the way of Cain, etc. True and righteous are thy judgments, Lord Jesus.

Woe unto them ! *for in the way of Cain they walked* (a substitution = they imitated his disposition and conduct), *and in the error of Balaam for reward rushed on* ; like torrents unrestrained (for this is the force of the metaphor), they gave themselves up to his mode of teaching, and from the same base motive ; *and in the gainsaying of Korah perished*, were swallowed up and lost under similar signal indications of the wrath of God. Num. 16. Gainsaying; by metonymy, the sign or outward indication of a rebellious spirit.

Cain, although a professed worshipper of God, was especially distinguished for his unbelief, pride, and cruelty ; the first rationalist and the first persecutor in our world. This is the way of Cain. (Notes on 1 Jno. 3 : 12.) *Balaam* became a teacher of idolatry and a promoter of lasciviousness, because of his accursed lust of gold, and that while ostentatiously professing to reverence and obey Jehovah. This is the error of Balaam. (Notes on 2 Pet. 2 : 15.) *Korah* was the chief of the princes that conspired against Moses and Aaron. This gainsaying company reviled glories, and set aside lordship, or treated with contempt the form of government in church and state as then divinely constituted, and openly opposed those who were appointed to uphold it. And so the dreamers of whom Jude speaks acted in reference to the apostles and prophets of the church, as well as to officers of the state.

The sense then is : Their punishment is just, for they are like Cain in pride, unbelief, and cruelty, like Balaam in sanctimonious avarice and licentious teaching, and like Korah in reviling and resisting divinely constituted teachers and rulers.

II. The explication of the figures is given above : but as to the grammatical explanation of *way*, *error*, and *gainsaying* in the Greek, Alford suggests that *way* is the normal dative, and Lillie that they are all datives

of the direction in which, but we think that they are datives of manner. *Misthou* = for hire, wages, or reward, is the genitive of source, designating the proximate cause or motive of their lawless activity. Lit. they were poured out (1 aor pass. in a mid. signification, like the Niphal in Hebrew) = they poured themselves forth, or rushed on.

¹² These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear : clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds ; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots ; ¹³ raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame ; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

The prediction is continued, in which the character of the ungodly false teachers is further portrayed in a series of impressive and sublime metaphors ; and that for the purpose of showing the justice of their punishment, as well as its certainty.

These are rocks in your love-feasts : not *spiloi*, spots, as in 2 Pet. 2 : 13, but *spilades*, rocks in and by the sea. Peter speaks of the disgrace they bring on Christian societies, Jude of their dangerous, fatal power as teachers. These impious men are like the rocks on a coast or in a harbor, on which the ship, though filled with merry voyagers, strikes, and many perish. At the feasts indicative of brotherly love, while suspecting no harm, unestablished souls, suddenly encountering them, make shipwreck of the faith and a good conscience. Cf. 1 Tim. 1 : 19 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 6, 7. As teachers, they are soul-destroyers.

These are the rocks in your love-feasts, *while banqueting irreverently with you, tending themselves*. The participles are causal. They are emphatically such rocks, for while associating with you at your feasts indicative of Christian love, they care only for themselves, and have not the fear of God before their eyes. They are peculiarly dangerous, because supremely irreverent and selfish. There is a metaphor in the word *tending*, and the sense is : Discharging the duty of shepherds to—*themselves* : there is also a tinge of

holy irony in it, and no form of speech could more unequivocally describe their perfect selfishness ; not merely their gluttony, as some needlessly restrict it. Dangerous indeed they are, for their irreverent example is contagious ; and their supreme selfishness stifles the admonitions of conscience ; and what care they for the wreck of souls ?

Clouds without water borne along by winds. In 2 Pet. 2 : 17 the best authenticated reading is : “ *wells* without water, and *mists* by a tempest driven.” But Jude describes the false teachers by a single metaphor, *waterless, windborne clouds—i.e.*, specious but useless as teachers, like dark, swiftly moving clouds that seem to indicate a coming shower, but give no rain.

“ Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift (is like) clouds and wind without rain.” Prov. 25 : 14. And so it is with the ungodly perverters of God’s grace as revealed in the gospel. They boast of a gift not bestowed on them ; of their insight, and of the philosophy of religion, vainly affirming that they have knowledge superior to those who study and reverence the word of God, and who with a holy delight cling to and obey the Lord Jesus Christ.

Trees with withered fruit, unfruitful, twice dead, uprooted. As to their nature, disposition, and moral character, they are like *trees with withered*, sickly, or decayed, *fruit* ; or, like *blighted autumnal trees* : there is a marked defect, a worthlessness of motive even in their apparently saintly actions. Indeed, they are like *unfruitful* or barren trees, morally incapable of producing the genuine fruit of holiness. Mat. 7 : 18. *Twice dead* ; before their profession of Christianity and after it, dead both before and after they were planted in the garden of God ; utterly destitute of holiness, or not regenerated. *Uprooted—i.e.*, plucked up by the roots. Not like trees cut down with an axe, but as trees prostrated by a sudden wind, and their roots laid bare, with no hope of recovery. Since there has been and is no holiness in them, their final ruin is near and inevitable. Mat. 7 : 19.

Others, following the Vulgate, translate thus: *Trees autumnal, fruitless*, etc., which they explain by Fruitless autumnal trees; or thus: trees leafless, fruitless, etc. We prefer the former mode of rendering, but either way the striking climax is retained.

Wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame. The waves are called *wild* by a bold and forcible metaphor; raging and roaring on the ocean as wild beasts in a forest. And the storm of passion within these impious men bursts forth like wild waves of the sea, so that they appear covered with moral pollution as the billows with foam.

If we translate: *foaming up* (i.e., to the shore) *their own shame*, the sense remains the same. "As the storm-tossed waves dash up the sea-weed, shells, fish, and refuse of every kind upon the beach, so these cannot hide their iniquity in their own breasts, but continually expose their shame to view." (Gardiner.) Cf. Isa. 57 : 20; Phil. 3 : 19.

The sense then is: Fierce, sensual, and lawless are they. Entreating them to subdue their passions is like speaking to the ocean in a storm. They allow not even the legates of the Most High to hinder the open exhibition of their indecencies, ver. 8.

Wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness forever hath been kept. Meteors that emit a transient brilliancy, and then are extinguished in utter and perpetual darkness: like these meteors, the false teachers with their disciples and imitators flash for a moment in the church, and then disappear in the gloomy and perpetual prison kept for them. There is no allusion to planets, in the modern signification of that term; for the point of the metaphor is in the contrast between a momentary gleam and perfect perpetual blackness; which is not true of the planets, but agrees well with meteors, or "shooting stars." Or, if meteors are not alluded to, then the reference is to comets, which is favored by the descriptive adjunct, *wandering*, or *wanderers* (see below); then the point of the comparison

relates to a temporary swiftly-disappearing brilliancy and perfect perpetual darkness.

These impious perverters of God's grace and deniers of our Lord shall most certainly and justly be punished. For (1.) they are like Cain, Balaam, and Korah. (2.) As teachers, they are soul-destroyers; rocks on which many strike and perish. Also specious deceivers; waterless clouds borne along by winds; and sensational preachers; erratic comets or shooting stars. (3.) As men eminently wicked they ought to be punished; for their best external actions are wholly tainted by depraved motives, and they are characterized by a complete moral incapacity and insensibility, so that there is no hope of their restoration to truth and holiness; blighted autumnal trees, unfruitful, twice dead, uprooted. They are also fierce, lawless, and sensual; wild waves of the sea foaming out their own indecencies.

The punishment kept or reserved for these Antinomian Libertines is fearful and everlasting: the blackness of darkness forever. Cf. vs. 6, 7, and notes on 2 Pet. 2 : 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 17.

12. S cop these are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, rocks in your love-feasts; but what precedes "rocks" is owing to a blunder of some transcriber, the same words occurring, v. 16.

B C K L S sah cop love-feasts (*agapais*), A deceits (*apatais*). C has with you after banqueting. The reference is not to their banqueting together, or with their boon companions alone, but with professed disciples as disciples, as the word fearlessly or irreverently intimates. A B C K L S borne along by winds (though S has by every wind), vg as c. t. Some follow the Vulgate in translating *spilades* by spots, but this is opposed to the classical usage of the word, and originates from an unwise desire to make Peter and Jude say the same thing, even when they unquestionably aim at a different mark: as has been shown above. We follow Eng. vers., and render *pthinoporina*, with withered fruit, taking the season metonymically for its fruit: cf. Rev. 18 : 14, Gr., and the first part of the compound word intransitively, as in the Greek *pthinokolos*, with wasting limbs. (See Lillie's learned and copious note: cited by Mombert.) The meaning, *late autumnal*, is, however, approved by many. Perhaps the best rendering is *Blighted autumnal trees*. *Akarpa*, not simply fruitless, but unfruitful or barren. Cf. 2 Pet. 1 : 8; Tit. 3 : 14.

13. Alford thinks that the allusion is to "comets, which astonish the world for a while and then pass away into darkness." The later Syriac version has meteors, or shooting stars. And so it is explained by Gardiner.

¹⁴ And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, ¹⁵ to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

To his own prediction Jude adds another, in which the certainty and justice of the punishment of the eminently ungodly at the coming of the Lord, is shown from a prophecy ascribed to Enoch.

Enoch walked with God, had a childlike faith in the revelations then given, pleased God, and, changed from mortal to immortal in body and perfectly sanctified in spirit, was taken up into heaven. Gen. 5 : 21-24 ; Heb. 11 : 5, 6. Being such a friend of God, it is highly probable that Enoch himself received revelations from Him, though that is not expressly recorded in Scripture, unless the present passage must be so understood. And if so, then Jude received Enoch's prophecy from the immediate suggestion of the Holy Spirit.

Some have supposed that Jude took these words from an oral or written tradition then current among the Jews ; as in ver. 9.

The apocryphal work called the Book of Enoch has a passage very like the words before us : " Behold, he cometh with ten thousands of saints to execute judgment on them, and he will destroy the ungodly and judge all flesh in all things which the sinners and the ungodly have committed and done against him."

But whether Jude cited these words depends on the date of the apocryphal book, which is an unsettled question ; some, for example, contending that it was written in the

time of the Maccabees, others during the reign of the first Herod, and others in the second century of our era.

Let us suppose that the book of Enoch was composed in the reign of Herod, and that Jude here cites it ; and then what follows? Only this, that Jude approves of the passage cited, or holds it as true. And so it is ; for the words express the invariable doctrine of scriptural prophecy in the matter spoken of : it would be true, even if Satan had uttered it.

It does not follow, however, that Jude considered the writer of the book referred to a prophet, or approved of other matters contained in it ; which, in our judgment, is evident from the preface to the citation : *But even according to these* Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying. *Toutois* is the dative, not of reference, not of disadvantage, but of opinion or judgment ; as in the following passages : “ Moses was fair according to God ;” in His judgment beautiful, Acts 7 : 20. “ If according to others I am not an apostle, yet at least I am according to you ;” whatever the opinions of others may be as to my office, your judgment must be clear in the matter. 1 Cor. 9 : 2. “ What things were gain to me,” in my judgment when a self-righteous Pharisee. Phil. 3 : 7. Our interpretation is not only consistent with usage, but it is exactly adapted to silence the men against whom Jude wrote ; for they disregarded apostolic predictions, as is implied in vs. 17-19. And hence he very properly quotes a work which they ascribed to Enoch and held to be inspired : But if they scoff at the blackness of everlasting darkness kept for the ungodly, even in the judgment of these men Enoch predicted the very same thing. (And it is well known that this doctrine often appears in the book of Enoch.) In this manner Jude lets the leaders in Satan’s army fall on their own swords.

Moreover, these words as cited and approved by Jude relate to the second advent of our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ, with His retinue, and the design of His

coming, so far as pertains to ungodly and vile sinners. Lit., Behold, *the Lord came* (*i.e.*, *cometh*, the future described as past after the prophetic manner), *in His holy myriads*, in the midst of, surrounded by, with, or among them; both angels and the redeemed being denoted. *Myriads*, by synecdoche. Vast multitudes of holy angels and men composed His retinue. They are called *His* holy myriads, because He is the Creator and Lord of both. Cf. Mat. 16 : 27 ; 25 : 31 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 7-10 ; Dan. 7 : 10. Also, because they will be the executors of His will, or obey all His commands, Mat. 13 : 41, 42, and hence they are called the angels of His power. 2 Thes. 1 : 7. The same is true of the risen and glorified saints in that day. Rev. 19 : 14 ; 2 : 26-28 ; Ps. 149 : 5-9.

The design of His coming : *To do judgment against all*, act as judge or pass sentence against all, *and to convict* (and by implication justly to punish) *all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds*, etc. It is, then, to act as an impartial judge against the eminently impious, to demonstrate the justice of His decision in their case, and so to cover them with everlasting shame and contempt, the objects of abhorrence to all the holy. Isa. 66 : 24. (Notes on 1 Pet. 4 : 5.)

14. B C K L Did Oec Thph vg his holy myriads, S myriads of holy angels.

15. A B C all the ungodly, K L as c. t. *auton* after *asebeis*; S every soul concerning all the deeds, A B K L concerning all their ungodly deeds.

Tischendorf : Aethiops vero Enoch : ecce venit cum myriadibus sanctorum suorum iudicium de iis facere, abolere malos et punire omnem carnem de omnibus quæ peccatores et impii fecerunt et commiserunt adversus ipsum.

All the *hard* or *stiff* words spoken against the Lord—*i.e.*, obstinate and insolent speeches uttered against Him, or His ways and dealings with them, as seems to be intimated at the beginning of the next verse : as stiff winds strike against a ship, so their obstinate wickedness appears in all the words which they vehemently direct against the Lord. (Jas. 3 : 4.) Cf. 1 Ki. 12 : 13, 14 ; Mal. 3 : 13, 14. So we understand the metaphor here. In Jno. 6 : 60, it is used differently, and not followed by *against*.

¹⁶ These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts ; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

Jude, having disarmed the leaders in Satan's army with their own weapons, now continues his description of the impious who abuse the grace of God, and who deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ. *Murmurers, complainers* : these show their dislike of God by charging Him foolishly with a want of wisdom and justice in the government of our world, who complain of their lot in the present life ; irreverent and discontented fault-finders. Num. 11 : 1, etc., and 14 ; 1 Cor. 10.

Our world is the residence of sinners, and God in Christ has, in infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness, adapted it to such. But those who find fault with the Lord amidst the abundant means and provisions given them for their present and eternal well-being, are wholly inexcusable. " Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it ?" Prov. 17 : 16.

Walking according to their own lusts ; making their own inordinate desires the rule of action ; ever thinking, speaking, and acting according to these lusts ; spurning any other guides. (2 Pet. 3 : 3.)

Such practically say, Let our desires and will be supreme : who is Lord over us ? We will live as we please. You may, but then you will die in your sins, have no hope in your death, nor at the great day, and your own lusts will be your eternal tormentors.

And their mouth speaketh great swelling words, or *overbulky* things ; words big with insolent pride and blasphemous falsehood. (Notes on 2 Pet. 2 : 18.) *Their mouth speaketh*, is a synecdoche, describing their pompous mode of utterance. For when the orators of the devil transform themselves as emphatically spiritual teachers, they must employ grandiloquent terms to conceal the blasphemy of their doctrines and the vileness of their aims, at least to the

uninitiated or those whom they wish to entangle in their snares. But to those who are entrapped and have swallowed the poisoned bait, they may speak more boldly. The so-called Spiritual Libertines in the sixteenth century said in a high-flying way that a state of innocence consists in making no distinction between virtue and vice ; that the spiritual life consists in acting according to one's desires ; and that at death men become gods, being taken up and absorbed in the Divine essence : which may suffice as a specimen of blasphemous, pantheistic falsehood. (Calvin on ver. 13.)

Admiring faces for the sake of advantage. To admire the face is to favor or honor any one from a mere regard to his external rank and condition, to be a respecter of persons, or partial. (Cf. Lev. 19 : 15, and notes on Jas. 2 : 1-13.) And this false teachers are always doing for the sake of advantage—*i.e.*, to promote their own selfish ends, whatever they may be, whether increase in filthy lucre, the indulgence of their bodily appetites, or the gratification of a demon-like ambition.

These characteristics are stated in order to elucidate the justice of their punishment at the coming of Christ the Lord. It is right, because the false teachers, with their disciples and imitators, are irreverent and discontented fault-finders, their hearts always fretting against the Lord ; persons who acknowledge no law but their own lusts ; proud teachers and advocates of blasphemous falsehood ; and persons who fawn upon the rich and powerful for purely selfish purposes—with no love to the souls of men.

¹⁷ But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ ; ¹⁸ how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹ These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. ²⁰ But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ

unto eternal life. ²² And of some have compassion, making a difference ; ²³ and others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire ; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Concluding exhortations addressed to the called, first in reference to themselves, and next in relation to others ; exhortations suitable to the state of the church then, and now also. 1. Attend to the apostolic predictions concerning false teachers and scoffers in the church, and especially to what Peter has said concerning it. (Cf. the Introduction to this epistle.) *But as for you, beloved, be mindful of the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, for they said unto you, In the last time there shall be scoffers, walking according to their own ungodly lusts.* (Notes on 2 Pet. 3 : 2, 3. Cf. Acts 20 : 29, 30 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 1-5 ; 1 Jno. 2 : 18, etc.) Here Jude, a prophet or inspired writer of the Apostolic Church, by the manner of his citing 2 Pet. 3 : 2, 3, gives his testimony to that epistle as Peter's, as written by one of the apostles of Christ. And the whole course of Jude's argument against the perverters of God's grace, and the deniers of the Redeemer as Master, is based upon 2 Pet. 2 ; in this manner confirming that chapter also as an apostolic prediction. The coincidences, then, verbal and argumentative, between the two epistles, instead of being stumbling-blocks, are stepping-stones leading to a higher and well-built tower in God's house ; instead of weakening, they tend to confirm our faith. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men."

Jude's design in this exhortation is to prevent despondency, and the mental paralysis or inaction attending it. Do not, beloved, despair of the church, because some abominable men have crept stealthily into it. This proves that the apostles were truly inspired, and Peter in particular, who spoke so copiously of the rise, characteristics, and doom of false teachers and scoffers. Therefore be mindful of, or give practical attention to, his and their predictions in this matter.

Accordingly, Jude adds : *These* (whom I have all along described) *are the separatists* (or *they who are causing separations*), the sect-makers predicted by Peter, for he said, " Who shall stealthily bring in sects of destruction." 2 Pet. 2 : 1. You see that prophecy fulfilling before your eyes. (*They who are separating themselves* amounts to the same thing.) Cf. Rom. 16 : 17, 18. These are the separatists, *natural, not having the Spirit*. We have no word in our tongue that fully corresponds with the original. (Eng. Vers. *natural*, 1 Cor. 2 : 14 ; 15 : 44, 46, but here and Jas. 3 : 15, *sensual* : not found elsewhere.) Natural men are those who act in accordance with the dictates of their fallen nature, or they who are unrenewed. (See notes on Jas. 3 : 15, and Hodge on 1 Cor. 2 : 14.) Some consider the phrase, *not having the Spirit*, as a further description or explanation of what is meant by *natural*. So " not to have the Spirit of Christ " is = not to be renewed and sanctified by His Spirit. Rom. 8 : 9. But the expression, " to have the Spirit of God," means to be inspired, to be an infallible teacher. 1 Cor. 7 : 40. Here the sense is : These men are dreamers. They boast indeed of having the Spirit. But I give you my judgment as a prophet (intimated by the use of the subjective negative) that they are not inspired. This mode of explanation seems to us correct ; for (1.) thus a seeming tautology is avoided, " natural " and " not having the Spirit," by the first interpretation being identical in signification. (2.) So the climax is more obvious and forcible : These are the separatists, unregenerate men, boasting indeed of revelations from the Spirit, but wholly destitute of such revelations. (1 Jno. 4 : 1, etc.) (3.) So also a powerful motive is suggested for attending to the apostolic predictions.

2. Keep yourselves in the love of God, and that in the manner here set forth : *But as for you, beloved, building up yourselves*, etc. The metaphors are exceedingly beautiful. The love of God is like a sphere or territory within which we are to keep ourselves, and wherein we are to become like a house or temple laid on the best possible foundation,

the superstructure ever increasing in height, beauty, and stability ; the called being like builders, revealed truth as the foundation, and the superstructure a constant increase in all the graces characteristic of the renewed.

The great duty enjoined : *Keep yourselves in the love of God*. Continue in the full persuasion of God's love to you, " the called, beloved in God the Father : " ver. 1. Do not go beyond that sphere, wandering in the misty land of doubt and gloomy despondency. Cf. 1 Pet. 5 : 10, 11. This interpretation agrees well, not only with the inscription of the epistle, but also with the present context, in both of which there is an unmistakable allusion to the work of the Trinity in our salvation. There he says : To the called (by the Spirit), beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ. And here : Keep yourselves in the love of God, praying in the Holy Spirit, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

The manner of performing the duty is shown in the participial clauses. By *building up yourselves on your most holy faith* ; on the foundation laid by prophets and apostles, or the truths revealed in Scripture. Faith, by metonymy, for the object of faith ; as in ver. 3. Objective faith, or revealed truth, is *most holy* in itself, and in its tendency. Tit. 1 : 1 ; Jas. 1 : 18, 21. And *we build up ourselves on it*, when by constant study and diligent efforts we increase in the knowledge of God's most holy Word, and in love and obedience to it, and when we daily lean on and obey Christ. Cf. 2 Pet. 3 : 17, 18.

" Having been built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets," the foundation laid by those wise master-builders of the Christian church—*i.e.*, the truths revealed to and taught by them ; and that in perfect conformity with the teachings of the ancient prophets (1 Pet. 1 : 10-13) ; " Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," upholding all that build themselves on Him, the Messiah prophet-priest-king, the keystone of the arch of Holy Scrip-

ture. Eph. 2 : 20. What Paul thus exhibits didactically, Jude puts in the form of a precept or exhortation.

Keep yourselves in the love of God, not only by building up yourselves on your most holy faith, but also by *praying in the Holy Spirit* : by depending on His almighty, sanctifying power, in order that ye may keep yourselves within the love of God, and expressing that dependence by constant calling on the Father. *In* the Holy Ghost, is = wholly under His influence, and by His loving help. Cf. Eph. 6 : 18 ; Rom. 8 : 26, 27. Praying *in and by* the Holy Spirit, giving ourselves up to His blessed guidance. (Notes on 1 Jno. 5 : 14.) *Praying* implies a constant consciousness of weakness, a daily crying for help in the midst of our conflicts, a leaning of weakness on holy omnipotence and love. And the expression, praying in the Holy Spirit, implies that the Spirit has already been given us. 1 Jno. 3 : 24 ; 4 : 4 ; Eph. 3 : 20 ; that the called can and must so pray. And this kind of praying is necessary to deepen the conviction of the Father's love to us, as well as to make our hearts overflow with love to Him. 1 Jno. 4 : 19.

Keep yourselves in the love of God, by *waiting for* (as it is rendered Mk. 15 : 43, and elsewhere) *the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life* : by the constant cherishing of that blessed hope.

The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ : a metonymy of the cause for the effect ; the glorious and final manifestation of it in the day of His appearing, vs. 1, 24 ; Tit. 2 : 13. (Notes on 1 Pet. 1 : 13.) *Unto* eternal life ; leading to, or ending in, that life : as in 1 Pet. 1 : 7. Cf. 1 Jno. 2 : 25. The beginning, progress, and consummation of our redemption by Christ are all owing to His infinite mercy. 2 Tim. 1 : 18. This hope, this desire and expectation of obtaining mercy from our Lord in that day, is necessary, precisely as the rest, to keep ourselves within the sphere of God's love.

3. As to the deceived among you, deal with them as their mental state requires. Adapt the medicine to the peculiar constitution and disease of the patient. *And on some have*

compassion, while contending (as it is rendered ver. 9) ; show mercy to some, while you are endeavoring to convince them of their errors in doctrine and life. If they show any signs of tenderness of conscience, any desire to return to truth and duty, reason mildly with them from the Holy Scriptures. You expect mercy from Christ, and it becomes you to show mercy to such. *But others save in fear, snatching (them) out of the fire, hating also the garment spotted by the flesh.* This precept or direction relates to those whose reason and conscience have been blunted by deceivers, and whose speedy destruction seems near ; like men bound hand and foot, and thrown into the fire. *Save others, snatching them out of the fire,* is a substitution, = while attempting to deliver them, be speedy and powerful ; or, use a holy violence in rescuing them from speedy destruction. *In fear, and hating also the garment spotted by the flesh,* are expressions describing the mode in which the precept is to be obeyed. It should be attempted in fear—*i.e.*, in that mental state, or with trembling anxiety for their salvation, and at the same time with an intense dislike of their sins as polluting and degrading. (The meaning of “hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” has just been stated ; but it is not easy to designate the figure contained in the expression. It seems to be a substitution, logically connected with the foregoing clause, and if so, *kai* should be rendered by *and* or *also* : plucking them out of the fire, *and* doing it *with their filthy garment on.* Lev. 13 : 47, etc.

There is no confusion of thought in the common text, and it is capable, as we have seen, of a clear and consistent interpretation throughout. But the text now generally adopted by critical editors of the Greek Testament (see notes below) appears in the following translation : *And some who are contentious convict ; but others save, snatching them out of the fire ;* on others have *compassion in fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.* Thus there are three classes of the deceived, proud disputants, who are to be convicted, or thoroughly exposed and refuted ; the hardened trans-

gressors in imminent danger of destruction ; and the third class those who are sinking in hopelessness because of well-known sins, which are to be hated, while they are to be pitied. But according to this classification *pity in fear* seems to be put violently in the wrong place. The same must be said of *hating even the garment*, etc. Judging from internal evidence alone, the common text is decidedly preferable.

Sad, indeed, it is to find unrenewed men, raising discord and promoting sects in the Christian church, and flinging away with disdain the Scriptures inspired of God ! And sadder still is it to see the multitudes following them ! Let us therefore, as we have opportunity, and as Jude directs, strive to save some.

How delightful it is to be ever engaged in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and to become conscious of increase in the graces characteristic of the renewed ! What unspeakable peace pervades our souls, when we move in the sphere of the Father's love, have the source of our life and strength in the Holy Spirit, and look always with uplifted eye for our Redeemer, in order to consummate His mercy towards us in our glorious and everlasting salvation !

18. The first *hoti* seems to be causal, the second recitative. Lit. *Their own lusts of ungodlinesses*,—*i.e.*, ungodly desires variously manifested, according to each one's peculiar disposition.

19. A B K L S cop sah they who separate (the separatists), C vg add themselves : *hoi apodiorizontes*, they who are marking off boundaries ; hence making separations, sect-makers, or separatists : *psuchikoi* ; some interpret it by " animal," others by " sensual," but these give very imperfectly the sense of the original. " Psychical " (the Greek word anglicized), preferred by others, is wholly unintelligible to a mere English reader. Hence, until a better word is suggested, we prefer " natural " or " natural men," in the sense above explained.

22, 23. K L Oec Thph same as the c. t. The other authorities vary greatly : see Tischendorf in loc. But A C cop vg (taking the participle as passive) have, And some who are contentious convict (refute) *elegchete diakrinomenous*). Did not the diversity of reading originate from the ambiguity of the word *diakrinomenoi* ; some transcriber taking it as = contending, as in Jude ver. 9 (cf. Acts 11 : 2), and another as = doubt-

ing, as in Jas. 1 : 6 ; Acts 11 : 12 ? (The explanation, " making a difference," can hardly be justified by appealing to Jas. 2 : 4, for there the 1 aor. pas. evidently means to show partiality.) A specimen of the various readings, B thus : And on some who doubt (*diakrinomenous*) have compassion ; save plucking out of the fire ; on others have compassion in fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. S : And on some who doubt (as in B) have compassion ; others save plucking from the fire ; on others have compassion in fear, hating, etc. Vg : Et hos quidem arguite judicatos. Illos vero salvate, de igne rapiētes. Aliis autem miseremini in timore, odientes et eam, quæ carnalis est, maculatam tunicam.

The later Syriac version : And some of them snatch from the fire. And when they repent, have compassion on them in fear, hating, etc.

The reading *elegchete*, convict, may have been mistaken by a hasty glance for *eleete* or *eleate*, have compassion on.

In this confusion of the historical evidence, we adhere to the c. t.

Chiton is strictly = the tunic, or inner garment.

²⁴ Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, ²⁵ to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Jude concludes his epistle with a very appropriate doxology. *But* (since all our efforts to promote the salvation of ourselves and others owe their favorable issue to God alone) *unto Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you* (make you stand) *in the presence of His glory faultless with exceeding joy*, etc.

Able to keep you from stumbling (or *without stumbling*), by substitution, is = enable you to persevere in truth and holiness ; walk with a firm step in the right path. Cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 5.

His glory—that is, the glory of God the Father—is metonymically used for the bright manifestation of His infinite perfections, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. And to be presented in the presence of His glory, or *be made to stand right before it*, is by His blessed agency to become spectators of His glory, and, in our measure, sharers in it ; but in Christ Jesus. 1 Pet. 5 : 10. Accordingly, it is written :

“For the Son of Man is about to come in the glory of His Father,” etc., and also “in His own glory.” Mat. 16 : 27 ; 25 : 31. And there is no incongruity herein, for in Christ Jesus there dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Col. 2 : 9. When the called, or renewed, so stand, they will be *faultless*, without blemish, or with no defect in mind or body ; and *in exceeding joy*, in a state of unspeakable blessedness. Cf. 1 Pet. 4 : 13 ; Rev. 19 : 7.

The last verse, as found in the oldest manuscripts and versions : To the only God our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, glory, majesty, power, and authority, before every age, and now, and to all the ages. Amen.

To the only God our Saviour (cf. 2 Tim. 1 : 9 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 3, and notes on 1 Jno. 5 : 20) *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, or Jehovah, *glory*, or the highest honor be given, acknowledging with a holy delight His *majesty*, or infinite greatness as the King of the universe, His *power* (*kratos*), of actual dominion over the same, and His *authority*, or perfect right so to reign ; as it was *before every age*, and is *now*, and will be *to all the ages*. Amen.

Time in our world is marked, not only by the revolutions of sun, moon, and stars, but also by ages, or dispensations of God's grace. And before any age of this kind began on earth, glory, majesty, power, and authority were ascribed to God through Christ our Lord ; Jude thus taking for granted the eternal pre-existence of our Saviour as Jehovah, and as the object of adoration to holy angels in other worlds. So it is now, in the present dispensation of God's grace on earth ; all the called uniting in the glad doxology.

And the adoration of the only God our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord will go on *to all the ages*, or in the dispensations that are coming ; ages in which God will conspicuously exhibit the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2 : 7. So be it. “Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

24. C L S most versions *humas*, as c. t., B K *autous* : *aptaistous*, without stumbling (falling is included only by implication, Rom. 11 : 11); cf. notes on Jas. 3 : 2 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 10.

25. A B C S to the only God, K L to the only wise God : A B C L S, the versions, through Jesus Christ our Lord, K omits : A B C S glory majesty, K L glory and majesty : A B C L S cop vg before every age : B vg to all the ages, S to the ages. (We understand *pro chronon aionion*, Tit. 1 : 2, as = before the times characterized by ages, or before our world began, and hence from eternity, Eph. 1 : 4.) Compare Eph. 3 : 20, 21, and notes on 2 Jno. ver. 2, Jas. 2 : 5, and 2 Pet. 1 : 16-19. Jude, in ver. 24, seems to allude to 2 Pet. 1 : 10, 3 : 14, but the vg is singular in ending, ver. 24, with *In adventu Domini nostri Jesu Christi*.

"Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss return to reign."

